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KING ARTHUR AND HIS KNIGHTS

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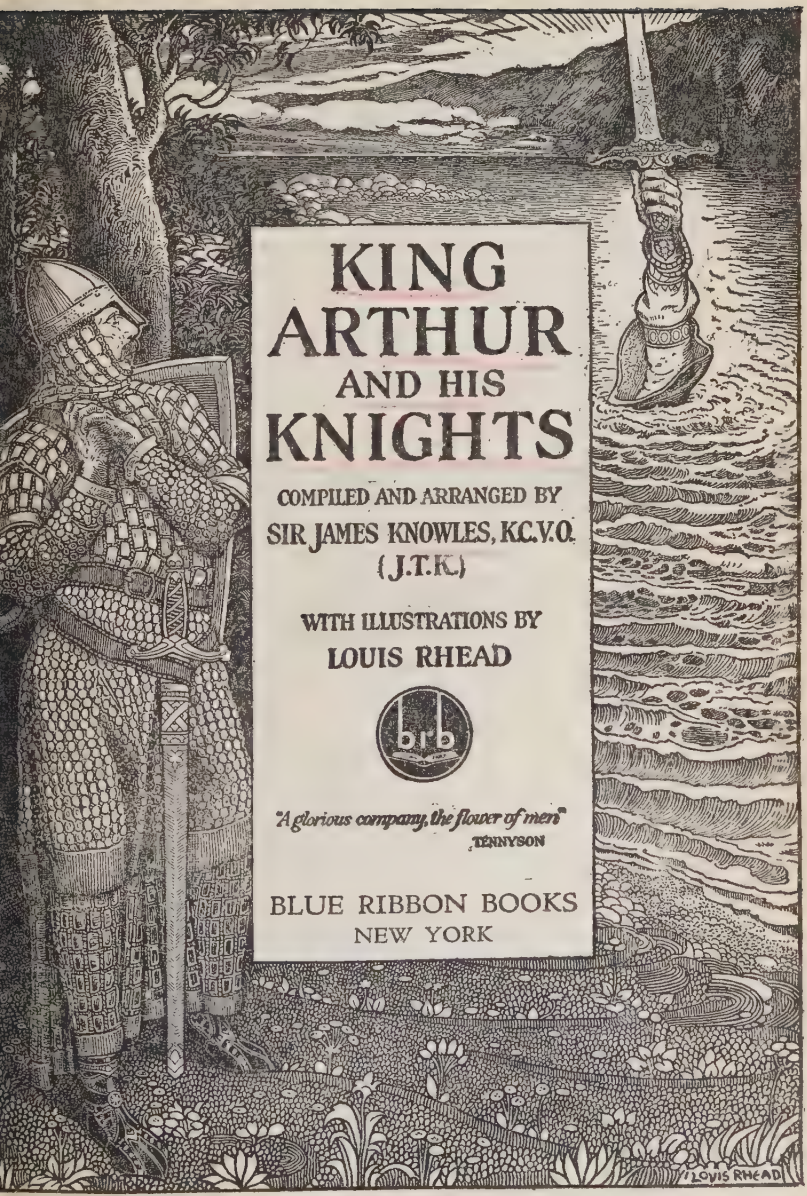

KING ARTHUR AND HIS KNIGHTS

COMPILED AND ARRANGED BY
SIR JAMES KNOWLES, K.C.V.O.
(J.T.K.)

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY
LOUIS RHEAD

"A glorious company, the flower of men"
TENNYSON

BLUE RIBBON BOOKS
NEW YORK

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

PAGE

The Finding of Merlin—The Fight of the Dragons—The Giants' Dance—The Prophecies of Merlin and the Birth of Arthur—Uther attacks the Saxons—The Death of Uther 1

CHAPTER II

Merlin's Advice to the Archbishop—The Miracle of the Sword and Stone—The Coronation of King Arthur—The Opposition of the Six Kings—The Sword Excalibur—The Defeat of the Six Kings—The War with the Eleven Kings 15

CHAPTER III

The Adventure of the Questing Beast—The Siege of York—The Battles of Celidon Forest and Badon Hill—King Arthur drives the Saxons from the Realm—The Embassy from Rome—The King rescues Merlin—The Knight of the Fountain 40

CHAPTER IV

King Arthur conquers Ireland and Norway—Slays the Giant of St. Michael's Mount and conquers Gaul—King Ryence's Insolent Message—The Damsel and the Sword—The Lady of the Lake—The Adventures of Sir Balin 60

U. S. 620089

CHAPTER V

Sir Balin kills Sir Lancear—The Sullen Knight—The Knight Invisible is killed—Sir Balin smites the Dolorous Stroke, and fights with his Brother Sir Balan 76

CONTENTS

PAGE

CHAPTER VI

The Marriage of King Arthur and Guinevere—The Coronation of the Queen—The Founding of the Round Table—The Quest of the White Hart—The Adventures of Sir Gawain—The Quest of the White Hound—Sir Tor kills Abellius—The Adventures of Sir Pellinore—The Death of Sir Hantzlake—Merlin saves King Arthur 9

CHAPTER VII

King Arthur and Sir Accolon of Gaul are entrapped by Sir Damas—They fight each other through Enchantment of Queen Morgan le Fay—Sir Damas is compelled to surrender all his Lands to Sir Outzlake, his Brother, their Rightful Owner—Queen Morgan essays to kill King Arthur with a Magic Garment—Her Damsel is compelled to wear it and is thereby burned to Cinders . . . 12

CHAPTER VIII

A Second Embassy from Rome—King Arthur's Answer—The Emperor assembles his Armies—King Arthur slays the Emperor—Sir Gawain and Sir Prianius—The Lombards are defeated—King Arthur crowned at Rome 1

CHAPTER IX

The Adventures of Sir Lancelot—He and his Cousin Sir Lionel set forth—The Four Witch-Queens—King Bagdemagus—Sir Lancelot slays Sir Turquine and delivers his Captive Knights—The Foul Knight—Sir Gaunter attacks Sir Lancelot—The Four Knights—Sir Lancelot comes to the Chapel Perilous—Ellawes the Sorceress—The Lady and the Falcon—Sir Bedivere and the Dead Lady 1

CHAPTER X

Beaumains is made a Kitchen Page by Sir Key—He claims the Adventure of the Damsel Linet—He fights with Sir Lancelot and is knighted by him in his True Name of Gareth—Is flouted by the Damsel Linet—But overthrows all Knights he meets and sends them to King Arthur's Court—He delivers the Lady Lyones from the Knight of the Redlands—The Tournament before Castle Perilous—Marriage of Sir Gareth and the Lady Lyones 1

CONTENTS

PAGE

CHAPTER XI

The Adventures of Sir Tristram—His Stepmother—He is knighted —Fights with Sir Marhaus—Sir Palomedes and La Belle Isault —Sir Bleoberis and Sir Segwarides—Sir Tristram's Quest—His Return—The Castle Pluere—Sir Brewnor is slain—Sir Kay Hedius—La Belle Isault's Hound—Sir Dinedan refuses to fight —Sir Pellinore follows Sir Tristram—Sir Brewse-without-pity— The Tournament at the Maiden's Castle—Sir Palomedes and Sir Tristram 222

CHAPTER XII

Merlin is bewitched by a Damsel of the Lady of the Lake—Galahad knighted by Sir Lancelot—The Perilous Seat—The Marvellous Sword—Sir Galahad in the Perilous Seat—The Sangreal—The Knights vow themselves to its Quest—The Shield of the White Knight—The Fiend of the Tomb—Sir Galahad at the Maiden's Castle—The Sick Knight and the Sangreal—Sir Lancelot declared unworthy to find the Holy Vessel—Sir Percival seeks Sir Galahad—The Black Steed—Sir Bors and the Hermit—Sir Pridan le Noir—Sir Lionel's Anger—He meets Sir Percival— The ship "Faith"—Sir Galahad and Earl Hernox—The Leprous Lady—Sir Galahad discloses himself to Sir Lancelot—They part —The Blind King Evelake—Sir Galahad finds the Sangreal— His Death 272

CHAPTER XIII

The Queen quarrels with Sir Lancelot—She is accused of Murder— Her Champion proves her Innocence—The Tourney at Camelot —Sir Lancelot in the Tourney—Sir Baldwin the Knight-Hermit —Elaine, the Maid of Astolat, seeks for Sir Lancelot—She tends his Wounds—Her Death—The Queen and Sir Lancelot are reconciled 331

CHAPTER XIV

Sir Lancelot attacked by Sir Agravaine, Sir Modred, and thirteen other Knights—He slays them all but Sir Modred—He leaves the Court—Sir Modred accuses him to the King—The Queen condemned to be burnt—Her Rescue by Sir Lancelot and Flight with him—The War between Sir Lancelot and the King—The Enmity of Sir Gawain—The Usurpation of Sir Modred—The Queen retires to a Nunnery—Sir Lancelot goes on a Pilgrimage —The Battle of Barham Downs—Sir Bedivere and the Sword Excalibur—The Death of King Arthur 360

ILLUSTRATIONS

FRONTISPIECE

MERLIN, THE ENCHANTER . . . . . *Page* 9

HOW ARTHUR DREW FORTH THE SWORD . . . " 17

THE LADY OF THE LAKE . . . . . " 23

HOW KING ARTHUR RECEIVED THE SWORD "EXCALIBUR" . . . . . " 29

ARTHUR AND THE QUESTING BEAST . . . . " 41

HOW THE BLACK KNIGHT WAS STRUCK DOWN BY MERLIN TO SAVE KING ARTHUR . . . . " 57

SO BALIN TOOK THE SWORD AND DREW IT LIGHTLY OUT . . . . . " 71

"OH, BALAN, MINE OWN BROTHER, THOU HAST SLAIN ME, AND I THEE" . . . . . " 91

TENTS WERE SET BESIDE SOME STREAM, KNIGHTS WOULD TELL ADVENTURES . . . . . " 95

HOW KING ARTHUR GREETED GUINEVERE . . . " 99

QUEEN GUINEVERE GOES A-MAYING . . . . " 117

MORGAN LE FAY SENDS A FALSE SWORD AND SCABBARD TO KING ARTHUR . . . . . " 125

THE GARMENT BURST INTO A FLAME . . . . " 133

ILLUSTRATIONS

SO PRIANIUS WAS CHRISTENED, AND MADE A DUKE AND KNIGHT OF THE ROUND TABLE . . . *Page* 149

COMBAT OF SIR LANCELOT AND SIR TURQUINE . . " 163

THE ADVENTURES OF SIR GARETH AND THE DAMSEL LINET . . . . . " 189

AND SO THEY PLIGHTED THEIR TROTH TO EACH OTHER . . . . . " 205

HOW SIR TRISTRAM RODE AWAY TO TINTAGIL . . " 227

LA BELLE ISAULT . . . . . " 233

PARTING OF SIR TRISTRAM AND LA BELLE ISAULT . " 239

THE WILY VIVIEN . . . . . " 269

"OH, SIR LANCELOT, THOU HAST BETRAYED ME" . " 283

"OH, GALAHAD, I CANNOT TEAR THEE AS I WOULD" " 289

HOW SIR PERCIVAL KILLED THE SERPENT . . . " 299

HOW SIR BORS WAS SAVED FROM KILLING HIS BROTHER . . . . . " 309

LANCELOT STANDING UPON THE THRESHOLD OF THE DOOR . . . . . " 323

ELAINE, THE LILY MAID OF ASTOLAT . . . " 333

ELAINE GUARDING LANCELOT'S SHIELD . . . " 353

HOW THE LIFELESS ELAINE FLOATED DOWN TO CAMELOT . . . . . " 357

SIR MODRED IN GREAT FEAR AND PAIN FLED FROM THE COURT . . . . . " 363

BUT THE KING'S SIDE HAD THE VICTORY, FOR HE WAS BEYOND HIMSELF WITH MIGHT AND PASSION . . . . . " 373

"BETIDE ME LIFE, BETIDE ME DEATH, NOW I SEE HIM YONDER ALONE" . . . . . " 379

ILLUSTRATIONS

FOUR COLORED ILLUSTRATIONS

Frontis *Facing page*

ARTHUR AND THE QUESTING BEAST 40

PARTING OF SIR TRISTRAM AND LA BELLE ISAULT . . . 238

ELAINE GUARDING LANCELOT'S SHIELD 352

ARTIST'S NOTE

It is a rare privilege for an artist to be given the opportunity of illustrating the story of King Arthur. But it is a privilege which entails responsibilities, involving as it does the necessity for careful research and study of the habits of life, the dress, armour, weapons, and domestic architecture and design of the 6th century.

The legendary King Arthur lived, scholars tell us, in the 6th century, the period of Celtic greatness, when this remarkable race had a literature of song and story while the rest of Europe was still struggling against the ignorance and chaos of the Dark Ages. The Celts had embraced Christianity before the birth of modern history; their churches and universities at Armagh, Glastonbury, Iona, and the mystic Cærleon in England were, after the fall of Rome, the chief seats of learning and religion in the Western World.

Fortunately for the conscientious illustrator, there remain a few fine examples of Celtic art and decoration notably at Kells, in Ireland, and in the famous Book of Kells) and these help in the re-creation of the life of the time.

Of the seventeen most important illustrated editions of the Arthur story produced here and abroad in the last fifty years, every one of the artists has chosen to depict Arthur and his knights in the costume and with the *mail* armour of the 14th, 15th, 16th, and even 17th centuries, presumably because Sir Thomas Malory, in translating the French compilation of prose romances, chose to describe the habits of life, dress, weapons, and armour that his own eyes looked upon about the year 1450 or later, regardless of the fact

ARTIST'S NOTE

that almost every detail belonged to a period somethin like a thousand years after King Arthur's death on Moun Badon.

A most notable exception to the work of all these illus trators is the superb series of Grail decorations by Edwi A. Abbey, for the Boston Library. After a careful an prolonged study of this great master's work I find tha down to the minutest detail, his pictures fairly glow wit the rich 6th century Celtic art, all his knights wea *chain* armour, instead of *mail,* which came into genera use late in the 14th century.

What does it matter, some might ask?

I answer, it matters much. The youthful faculty of ob servation is keen and early impressions remain long un tarnished. The feeling for accuracy need not be restricte to cube-root and fractions, and the true historian gathe his data from other less conscious records than the printe page. I hope to have a modest share in influencing stu dents and future illustrators to depict their characters i the period in which they lived—not a thousand years late just because a translator, however eminent and capabl happened to do so.

LOUIS RHEAD.

August, 1923.

PREFACE

THE Publishers have asked me to authorize a new edition, in my own name, of this little book—now long out of print—which was written by me thirty-five years ago under the initials J. T. K.

In acceding to their request I wish to say that the book as now published is merely a word-for-word reprint of my early effort to help to popularize the Arthur legends.

It is little else than an abridgment of Sir Thomas Malory's version of them as printed by Caxton—with a few additions from Geoffrey of Monmouth and other sources—and an endeavour to arrange the many tales into a more or less consecutive story.

The chief pleasure which came to me from it was, and is, that it began for me a long and intimate acquaintance with Lord Tennyson, to whom, by his permission, I dedicated it before I was personally known to him.

JAMES KNOWLES.

Addendum by Lady Knowles

In response to a widely expressed wish for a fresh edition of this little book—now for some years out of print—a new and ninth edition has been prepared.

In his preface my husband says that the intimacy with Lord Tennyson to which it led was the chief pleasure the

book brought him. I have been asked to furnish a fe more particulars on this point that may be generally inte esting, and feel that I cannot do better than give some ex tracts from a letter written by himself to a friend in Jul 1896.

"DEAR——,

"I am so *very* glad you approve of my little effort t popularize the Arthur Legends. Tennyson had written his fir four 'Idylls of the King' before my book appeared, which wa in 1861. Indeed, it was in consequence of the first four Idyl that I sought and obtained, while yet a stranger to him, leav to dedicate my venture to him. He was extremely kind abou it—declared 'it ought to go through forty editions'—and whe I came to know him personally talked very frequently about and Arthur with me, and made constant use of it when he a length yielded to my perpetual urgency and took up again h forsaken project of treating the whole subject of King Arthur

"He discussed and rediscussed at any amount of length th way in which this could now be done—and the Symbolism, whi had from his earliest time haunted him as the inner meaning be given to it, brought him back to the Poem in its chang shape of separate pictures.

. . . . . .

"He used often to say that it was entirely my doing that revived his old plan, and added, 'I know more about Arth than any other man in England, and I think you know ne most.' It would amuse you to see in what intimate detail used to consult with me—and often with my little book in fro of us—over the various tales, and when I wrote an article (the shape of a long letter) in the *Spectator* of January 1870 asked to reprint it, and published it with the collected Idyll

"For years, while his boys were at school and college, acted as his confidential friend in business and many other m ters, and I suppose he told me more about himself and his l than any other man now living knows."

ISABEL KNOWLES.

KING ARTHUR AND HIS KNIGHTS

KING ARTHUR AND HIS KNIGHTS

CHAPTER I

HE PROPHECIES OF MERLIN, AND THE BIRTH OF ARTHUR

KING VORTIGERN the usurper sat upon his throne in London, when, suddenly, upon a certain day, ran in a breathless messenger, and cried oud—

"Arise, Lord King, for the enemy is come; even Ambro- us and Uther, upon whose throne thou sittest—and full enty thousand with them—and they have sworn by a eat oath, Lord, to slay thee, ere this year be done; and en now they march towards thee as the north wind of inter for bitterness and haste."

At those words Vortigern's face grew white as ashes, id, rising in confusion and disorder, he sent for all the st artificers and craftsmen and mechanics, and com- anded them vehemently to go and build him straight- ay in the furthest west of his lands a great and strong stle, where he might fly for refuge and escape the ven- ance of his master's sons—"and, moreover," cried he, et the work be done within a hundred days from now, I will surely spare no life amongst you all."

Then all the host of craftsmen, fearing for their lives, und out a proper site whereon to build the tower, and gerly began to lay in the foundations. But no sooner ere the walls raised up above the ground than all their ork was overwhelmed and broken down by night in-

KING ARTHUR

visibly, no man perceiving how, or by whom, or wha
And the same thing happening again, and yet again, a
the workmen, full of terror, sought out the king, and thre
themselves upon their faces before him, beseeching him
interfere and help them or to deliver them from the
dreadful work.

Filled with mixed rage and fear, the king called f
the astrologers and wizards, and took counsel with the
what these things might b
and how to overcome ther
The wizards worked the
spells and incantations, ar
in the end declared th
nothing but the blood
a youth born without mo
tal father, smeared on t
foundations of the castle, could avail to make it stan
Messengers were therefore sent forthwith through all t
land to find, if it were possible, such a child. And,
some of them went down a certain village street, they sa
a band of lads fighting and quarrelling, and hea
them shout at one—"Avaunt, thou imp!—avaunt! S
of no mortal man! go, find thy father, and leave us
peace."

At that the messengers looked steadfastly on the la
and asked who he was. One said his name was Merli
another, that his birth and parentage were known by
man; a third, that the foul fiend alone was his fath
Hearing the things, the officers seized Merlin, and carri
him before the king by force.

But no sooner was he brought to them than he ask
in a loud voice, for what cause he was thus dragged ther

"My magicians," answered Vortigern, "told me to se
out a man that had no human father, and to sprinkle
castle with his blood, that it may stand."

"Order those magicians," said Merlin, "to come before
e, and I will convict them of a lie."

The king was astonished at his words, but commanded
e magicians to come and sit down before Merlin, who
ied to them—

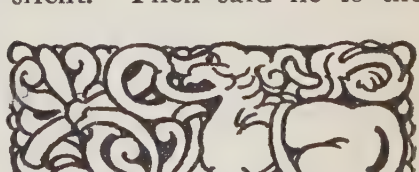
"Because ye know not what it is that hinders the founda-
on of the castle, ye have advised my blood for a cement
it, as if that would avail; but tell me now rather what
ere is below that ground, for something there is surely
nderneath that will not suffer the tower to stand?"

The wizards at these words began to fear, and made no
nswer. Then said Merlin to the king—

"I pray, Lord, that workmen may be ordered to dig
ep down into the ground till they shall come to a great
ol of water."

This then was done, and the pool discovered far beneath
e surface of the ground.

Then, turning again to the magicians, Merlin said,
Tell me now, false sycophants, what there is underneath
at pool?"—but they were silent. Then said he to the
ing, "Command this pool
be drained, and at the
ottom shall be found two
ragons, great and huge,
hich now are sleeping,
ut which at night awake
nd fight and tear each
ther. At their great strug-



les all the ground shakes and trembles, and so casts down
y towers, which, therefore, never yet could find secure
undations."

The king was amazed at these words, but commanded
e pool to be forthwith drained; and surely at the bot-
m of it did they presently discover the two dragons, fast
sleep, as Merlin had declared.

But Vortigern sat upon the brink of the pool till nig
to see what else would happen.

Then those two dragons, one of which was white, t
other red, rose up and came near one another, and beg
a sore fight, and cast forth fire with their breath. But t
white dragon had the advantage, and chased the oth
to the end of the lake. And he, for grief at his fligh
turned back upon his foe, and renewed the combat, a
forced him to retire in turn. But in the end the re
dragon was worsted, and the white dragon disappear
no man knew where.

When their battle was done, the king desired Merl
to tell him what it meant. Whereat he, bursting in
tears, cried out this prophecy, which first foretold the co
ing of King Arthur.

"Woe to the red dragon, which figureth the British n
tion, for his banishment cometh quickly; his lurking-hol
shall be seized by the white dragon—the Saxon whom tho
O king, hast called to the land. The mountains shall
levelled as the valleys, and the rivers of the valleys sha
run blood; cities shall be burned, and churches laid
ruins; till at length the oppressed shall turn for a seas
and prevail against the strangers. For a Boar of Cor
wall shall arise and rend them, and trample their nec
beneath his feet. The island shall be subject to his pow
and he shall take the forests of Gaul. The house of Rom
lus shall dread him—all the world shall fear him—and h
end shall no man know; he shall be immortal in the mout
of the people, and his works shall be food to those that t
them.

"But as for thee, O Vortigern, flee thou the sons
Constantine, for they shall burn thee in thy tower. F
thine own ruin wast thou traitor to their father, and di
bring the Saxon heathens to the land. Aurelius and Uth

AND HIS KNIGHTS

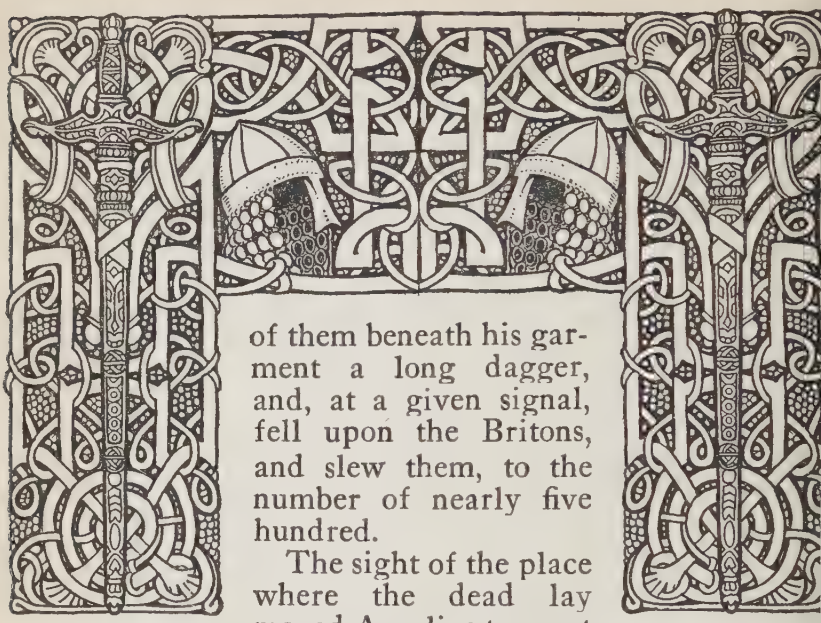
e even now upon thee to revenge their father's murder;
d the brood of the white dragon shall waste thy country,
d shall lick thy blood. Find out some refuge, if thou
lt! but who may escape the doom of God?"

The king heard all this, trembling greatly; and, con-
cted of his sins, said nothing in reply. Only he hasted
e builders of his tower by day and night, and rested not
l he had fled thereto.

In the meantime, Aurelius, the rightful king, was hailed
ith joy by the Britons, who flocked to his standard,
id prayed to be led against the Saxons. But he, till he
id first killed Vortigern, would begin no other war. He
arched therefore to Cambria, and came before the tower
hich the usurper had built. Then, crying out to all his
ights, "Avenge ye on him who hath ruined Britain and
ain my father and your king!" he rushed with many
ousands at the castle walls. But, being driven back
gain and yet again, at length he thought of fire, and
dered blazing brands to be cast into the building from
l sides. These finding soon a proper fuel, ceased not
rage till, spreading to a mighty conflagration, they
urned down the tower and Vortigern within it.

Then did Aurelius turn his strength against Hengist
id the Saxons, and, defeating them in many places, weak-
ned their power for a long season, so that the land had
eace.

Anon the king, making many journeys to and fro, re-
oring ruined churches and, creating order, came to the
onastery near Salisbury, where all those British knights
y buried who had been slain there by the treachery of
Hengist. For when in former times Hengist had made
solemn truce with Vortigern, to meet in peace and set-
e terms, whereby himself and all his Saxons should de-
art from Britain, the Saxon soldiers carried every one

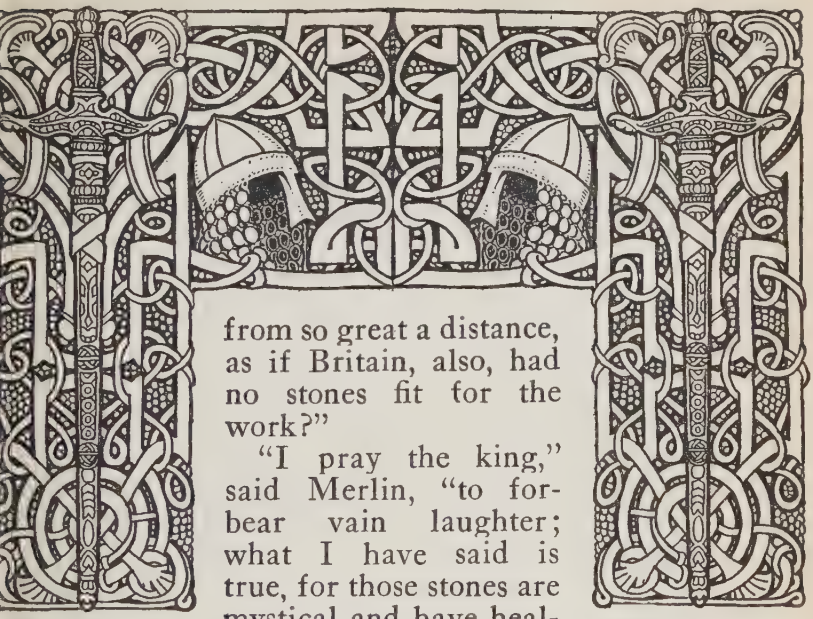


of them beneath his garment a long dagger, and, at a given signal, fell upon the Britons, and slew them, to the number of nearly five hundred.

The sight of the place where the dead lay moved Aurelius to great sorrow, and he cast about in his mind how to make worthy tomb over so many noble martyrs, who had die there for their country.

When he had in vain consulted many craftsmen an builders, he sent, by the advice of the archbishop, for Me lin, and asked him what to do. "If you would honou the burying-place of these men," said Merlin, "with a everlasting monument, send for the Giants' Dance whic is in Killaraus, a mountain in Ireland; for there is a stru ture of stone there which none of this age could raise witl out a perfect knowledge of the arts. They are stones of vast size and wondrous nature, and if they can be place here as they are there, round this spot of ground, they wi stand forever."

At these words of Merlin, Aurelius burst into laughte and said, "How is it possible to remove such vast ston



from so great a distance, as if Britain, also, had no stones fit for the work?"

"I pray the king," said Merlin, "to forbear vain laughter; what I have said is true, for those stones are mystical and have healg virtues. The giants of old brought them from the rthest coast of Africa, and placed them in Ireland while ey lived in that country: and their design was to make aths in them, for use in time of grievous illness. For if ey washed the stones and put the sick into the water, it rtainly healed them, as also it did them that were ounded in battle; and there is no stone among them but ath the same virtue still."

When the Britons heard this, they resolved to send for e stones, and to make war upon the people of Ireland, they offered to withhold them. So, when they had osen Uther the king's brother for their chief, they set il, to the number of 15,000 men, and came to Ireland. here Gillomanius, the king, withstood them fiercely, and ot till after a great battle could they approach the Giants' ance, the sight of which filled them with joy and admiraon. But when they sought to move the stones, the

strength of all the army was in vain, until Merlin, laugh ing at their failures, contrived machines of wondrous cun ning, which took them down with ease, and placed then in the ships.

When they had brought the whole to Salisbury, Aurelius with the crown upon his head, kept for four days th Feast of Pentecost with royal pomp; and in the midst of al the clergy and the people, Merlin raised up the stones, an set them round the sepulchre of the knights and barons as they stood in the mountains of Ireland.

Then was the monument called "Stonehenge," whic stands, as all men know, upon the plain of Salisbury t this very day.

Soon thereafter it befell that Aurelius was slain by poi son at Winchester, and was himself buried within th Giants' Dance.

At the same time came forth a comet of amazing siz and brightness, darting out a beam, at the end whereof wa a cloud of fire shaped like a dragon, from whose mout went out two rays, one stretching over Gaul, the othe ending in seven lesser rays over the Irish sea.

At the appearance of this star a great dread fell upo the people, and Uther, marching into Cambria against th son of Vortigern, himself was very troubled to learn wha it might mean. Then Merlin, being called before him cried with a loud voice: "O mighty loss! O stricken Bri ain! Alas! the great prince is gone from us. Aureliu Ambrosius is dead, whose death will be ours also, unle God help us. Haste, therefore, noble Uther, to destro the enemy; the victory shall be thine, and thou shalt b king of all Britain. For the star with the fiery drago signifies thyself; and the ray over Gaul portends tha thou shalt have a son, most mighty, whom all those king doms shall obey which the ray covers."

MERLIN, THE ENCHANTER

Thus, for the second time, did Merlin foretell the coming f King Arthur. And Uther, when he was made king, remembered Merlin's words, and caused two dragons to be nade in gold, in likeness of the dragon he had seen in the ar. One of these he gave to Winchester Cathedral, and ad the other carried into all his wars before him, whence e was ever after called Uther Pendragon, or the dragon's ead.

Now, when Uther Pendragon had passed through all the and, and settled it—and even voyaged into all the counries of the Scots, and tamed the fierceness of that rebel eople—he came to London, and ministered justice there. nd it befell at a certain great banquet and high feast hich the king made at Easter-tide, there came, with nany other earls and barons, Gorloïs, Duke of Cornwall, nd his wife Igerna, who was the most famous beauty in ll Britain. And soon thereafter, Gorloïs being slain in attle, Uther determined to make Igerna his own wife. ut in order to do this, and enable him to come to her—or she was shut up in the high castle of Tintagil, on the urthest coast of Cornwall—the king sent for Merlin, to ake counsel with him and to pray his help. This, therefore, Merlin promised him on one condition—namely, that he king should give him up the first son born of the narriage. For Merlin by his arts foreknew that this firstborn should be the long-wished prince, King Arthur.

When Uther, therefore, was at length happily wedded, Merlin came to the castle on a certain day, and said, "Sir, thou must now provide thee for the nourishing of hy child."

And the king, nothing doubting, said, "Be it as thou wilt."

"I know a lord of thine in this land," said Merlin, "who s a man both true and faithful; let him have the nourish-

ing of the child. His name is Sir Ector, and he hath fa
possessions both in England and in Wales. When, ther
fore, the child is born, let him be delivered unto me, u
christened, at yonder postern-gate, and I will bestow hi
in the care of this good knight.

So when the child was born, the king bid two knigh
and two ladies to take it, bound in rich cloth of gold, ar
deliver it to a poor man whom they should discover
the postern-gate. And the child being delivered thus
Merlin, who himself took the guise of a poor man, w
carried by him to a holy priest and christened by th
name of Arthur, and then was taken to Sir Ector's hous
and nourished at Sir Ector's wife's own breasts. And
the same house he remained privily for many years, n
man soever knowing where he was, save Merlin and th
king.

Anon it befell that the king was seized by a lingerin
distemper, and the Saxon heathens, taking their occasio
came back from over sea, and swarmed upon the land, wa
ing it with fire and sword. When Uther heard thereo
he fell into a greater rage than his weakness could bea
and commanded all his nobles to come before him, th
he might upbraid them for their cowardice. And wh
he had sharply and hotly rebuked them, he swore th
he himself, nigh unto death although he lay, would le
them forth against the enemy. Then causing a hors
litter to be made, in which he might be carried—for
was too faint and weak to ride—he went up with all h
army swiftly against the Saxons.

But they, when they heard that Uther was coming
a litter, disdained to fight with him, saying it would
shame for brave men to fight with one half dead.
they retired into their city; and, as it were in scorn
danger, left the gates wide open. But Uther straightw

mmanding his men to assault the town, they did so with-
t loss of time, and had already reached the gates, when
e Saxons, repenting too late of their haughty pride,
shed forth to the defence. The battle raged till night,
d was begun again next day; but at last, their leaders,
cta and Eosa, being slain, the Saxons turned their backs
d fled, leaving the Britons a full triumph.

The king at this felt so great joy, that, whereas before
could scarce raise himself without help, he now sat up-
ght in his litter by himself, and said, with a laughing
d merry face, "They called me the half-dead king, and
indeed I was; but victory to me half dead is better than
efeat and the best health. For to die with honour is
r better than to live disgraced."

But the Saxons, although thus defeated, were ready still
r war. Uther would have pursued them; but his illness
d by now so grown, that his knights and barons kept
m from the adventure. Whereat the enemy took cour-
ge, and left nothing undone to destroy the land; until,
escending to the vilest treachery, they resolved to kill the
ng by poison.

To this end, as he lay sick at Verulam, they sent and
oisoned stealthily a spring of clear water, whence he was
ont to drink daily; and so, on the very next day, he
as taken with the pains of death, as were also a hundred
hers after him, before the villainy was discovered, and
eaps of earth thrown over the well.

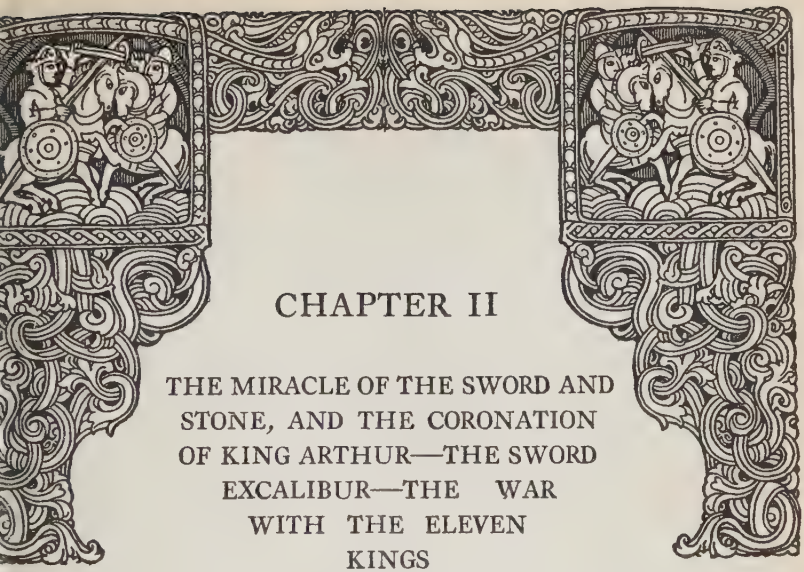
The knights and barons, full of sorrow, now took counsel
gether, and came to Merlin for his help to learn the
ng's will before he died, for he was by this time speech-
ss. "Sirs, there is no remedy," said Merlin, "and God's
ill must be done; but be ye all to-morrow before him,
r God will make him speak before he die."

So on the morrow all the barons, with Merlin, stood

round the bedside of the king; and Merlin said aloud t
Uther, "Lord, shall thy son Arthur be the king of a
this realm after thy days?"

Then Uther Pendragon turned him about, and said, i
the hearing of them all, "God's blessing and mine be upo
him. I bid him pray for my soul, and also that he clai
my crown, or forfeit all my blessing"; and with tho
words he died.

Then came together all the bishops and the clergy, an
great multitudes of people, and bewailed the king; an
carrying his body to the convent of Ambrius, they buri
it close by his brother's grave, within the "Giants' Dance



CHAPTER II

THE MIRACLE OF THE SWORD AND STONE, AND THE CORONATION OF KING ARTHUR—THE SWORD EXCALIBUR—THE WAR WITH THE ELEVEN KINGS

NOW Arthur the prince had all this time been nourished in Sir Ector's house as his own son, and was fair and tall and comely, being of the age of teen years, great in strength, gentle in manner, and accomplished in all exercises proper for the training of a ight.

But as yet he knew not of his father; for Merlin had so alt, that none save Uther and himself knew aught about m. Wherefore it befell, that many of the knights and rons who heard King Uther speak before his death, and ll his son Arthur his successor, were in great amazement; d some doubted, and others were displeased.

Anon the chief lords and princes set forth each to his vn land, and, raising armed men and multitudes of folwers, determined every one to gain the crown for himlf; for they said in their hearts, "If there be any such a n at all as he of whom this wizard forced the king to eak, who are we that a beardless boy should have rule er us?"

So the land stood long in great peril, for every lord and ron sought but his own advantage; and the Saxons, grow-

ing ever more adventurous, wasted and overran the tow and villages in every part.

Then Merlin went to Brice, the Archbishop of Cante bury, and advised him to require all the earls and baro of the realm and all knights and gentlemen-at-arms to co to him at London, before Christmas, under pain of cursi that they might learn the will of Heaven who should king. This, therefore, the archbishop did, and up Christmas Eve were met together in London all the gre est princes, lords, and barons; and long before day th prayed in St. Paul's Church, and the archbishop besoug Heaven for a sign who should be lawful king of all t realm.

And as they prayed, there was seen in the churchya set straight before the doorways of the church, a hu square stone having a naked sword stuck in the midst it. And on the sword was written in letters of gold, "Wh pulleth out the sword from this stone is born the right King of Britain."

At this all the people wondered greatly; and, when m was over, the nobles, knights, and princes ran out eage from the church to see the stone and sword; and a law w forthwith made that whoso should pull out the swo should be acknowledged straightway King of Britain.

Then many knights and barons pulled at the sword w all their might, and some of them tried many times, none could stir or move it.

When all had tried in vain, the archbishop declared man whom Heaven had chosen was not yet there. "H God," said he, "will doubtless make him known ere ma days."

So ten knights were chosen, being men of high nown, to watch and keep the sword; and there was pr lamation made through all the land that whosoever wo

HOW ARTHUR DREW FORTH THE SWORD

ad leave and liberty to try and pull it from the stone. But though great multitudes of people came, both gentle nd simple, for many days, no man could ever move the word a hair's breadth from its place.

Now, at the New Year's Eve a great tournament was o be held in London, which the archbishop had devised to keep together ords and commons, lest hey should grow estranged n the troublous and unset-led times. To the which ournament there came, vith many other knights, ir Ector, Arthur's foster-ather, who had great pos-essions near to London; nd with him came his son, ir Key, but recently made knight, to take his part in the ousting, and young Arthur also to witness all the sports nd fighting.

But as they rode towards the jousts, Sir Key found sud-enly he had no sword, for he had left it at his father's ouse; and turning to young Arthur, he prayed him to ride ack and fetch it for him. "I will with a good will," said rthur; and rode fast back after the sword.

But when he came to the house he found it locked and mpty, for all were gone forth to see the tournament. Whereat, being angry and impatient, he said within him-elf, "I will ride to the churchyard and take with me the word that sticketh in the stone, for my brother shall not go vithout a sword this day."

So he rode and came to the churchyard, and alighting rom his horse he tied him to the gate, and went to the

pavilion, which was pitched near the stone, wherein abod the ten knights who watched and kept it; but he foun no knights there, for all were gone to see the jousting.

Then he took the sword by its handle, and lightly an fiercely he pulled it out of the stone, and took his hors and rode until he came to Sir Key and delivered him th sword. But as soon as Sir Key saw it he knew well it wa the sword of the stone, and, riding swiftly to his fathe he cried out, "Lo! here, sir, is the sword of the stone, where fore it is I who must be king of all this land."

When Sir Ector saw the sword, he turned back straigh with Arthur and Sir Key and came to the churchyard, an there alighting, they went all three into the church, and Si Key was sworn to tell truly how he came by the sword Then he confessed it was his brother Arthur who ha brought it to him.

Whereat Sir Ector, turning to young Arthur, aske him—"How gottest thou the sword?"

"Sir," said he, "I will tell you. When I went home t fetch my brother's sword, I found nobody to deliver it t me, for all were abroad to the jousts. Yet was I loth t leave my brother swordless, and, bethinking me of this on I came hither eagerly to fetch it for him, and pulled out of the stone without any pain."

Then said Sir Ector, much amazed and looking stea fastly on Arthur, "If this indeed be thus, 'tis thou wh shalt be king of all this land—and God will have it so- for none but he who should be rightful Lord of Brita might ever draw this sword forth from that stone. B let me now with mine own eyes see thee put back the swo into its place and draw it forth again."

"That is no mystery," said Arthur; and straightway s it in the stone. And then Sir Ector pulled at it himse and after him Sir Key, with all his might, but both

iem in vain: then Arthur reaching forth his hand and rasping at the pommel, pulled it out easily, and at once. Then fell Sir Ector down upon his knees upon the round before young Arthur, and Sir Key also with him, nd straightway did him homage as their sovereign lord. But Arthur cried aloud, "Alas! mine own dear father nd my brother, why kneel ye thus to me?"

"Nay, my Lord Arthur," answered then Sir Ector, "we re of no blood-kinship with thee, and little though I nought how high thy kin might be, yet wast thou never ore than foster-child of mine." And then he told him l he knew about his infancy, and how a stranger had elivered him, with a great sum of gold, into his hands be brought up and nourished as his own born child, and nen had disappeared.

But when young Arthur heard of it, he fell upon Sir ctor's neck, and wept, and made great lamentation, "For ow," said he, "I have in one day lost my father and my other and my brother."

"Sir," said Sir Ector presently, "when thou shalt be made ng be good and gracious unto me and mine."

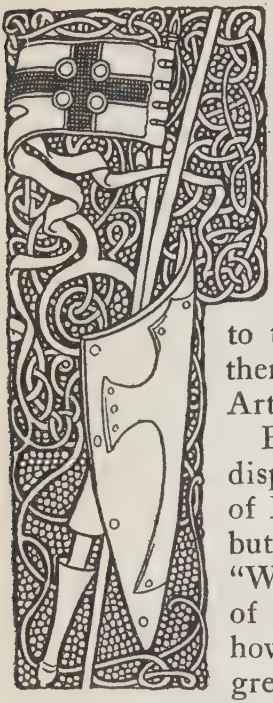
"If not," said Arthur, "I were no true man's son at all, r thou art he in all the world to whom I owe the most; nd my good lady and mother, thy wife, hath ever kept nd fostered me as though I were her own; so if it be God's ill that I be king hereafter as thou sayest, desire of me hatever thing thou wilt and I will do it; and God forbid at I should fail thee in it."

"I will but pray," replied Sir Ector, "that thou wilt ake my son Sir Key, thy foster-brother, seneschal of all e lands."

"That shall he be," said Arthur; "and never shall anher hold that office, save thy son, while he and I do live."

Anon they left the church and went to the archbishop

KING ARTHUR



to tell him that the sword had been achieved. And when he saw the sword in Arthur's hand he set a day and summoned all the princes, knights and barons to meet again at St. Paul's Church and see the will of Heaven signified. So when they came together, the sword was put back in the stone, and all tried, from the greatest to the least, to move it; but there before them all not one could take it out save Arthur only.

But then befell a great confusion and dispute, for some cried out it was the will of Heaven, and, "Long live King Arthur," but many more were full of wrath and said "What! would ye give the ancient sceptre of this land unto a boy born none knows how?" And the contention growing greatly, till nothing could be done to pacify their rage, the meeting was at length broken up by the archbishop and adjourned till Candlemas, when all should meet again.

But when Candlemas was come, Arthur alone again pulled forth the sword, though more than ever came to win it; and the barons, sorely vexed and angry, put it by delay till Easter. But as he had sped before so he did at Easter, and the barons yet once more contrived delays till Pentecost.

But now the archbishop, fully seeing God's will, called together, by Merlin's counsel, a band of knights and gentlemen-at-arms, and set them about Arthur to keep him safely till the Feast of Pentecost. And when at the feast Arthur still again alone prevailed to move the sword, the

THE LADY OF THE LAKE

eople all with one accord cried out, "Long live King rthur! we will have no more delay, nor any other king, r so it is God's will; and we will slay whoso resisteth im and Arthur"; and wherewithal they kneeled down all once, and cried for Arthur's grace and pardon that they d so long delayed him from his crown. Then he full veetly and majestically pardoned them; and taking in s'hand the sword, he offered it upon the high altar of the urch.

Anon was he solemnly knighted with great pomp by the ost famous knight there present, and the crown was placed on his head; and, having taken oath to all the people, rds and commons, to be true king and deal in justice ly unto his life's end, he received homage and service om all the barons who held lands and castles from the own. Then he made Sir Key, High Steward of Eng- nd, and Sir Badewaine of Britain, Constable, and Sir fius, Chamberlain: and after this, with all his court and great retinue of knights and armed men, he journeyed o Wales, and was crowned again in the old city of erleon-upon-Usk.

Meanwhile those knights and barons who had so long layed him from the crown, met together and went up the coronation feast at Caerleon, as if to do him homage; d there they ate and drank such things as were set be- e them at the royal banquet, sitting with the others in : great hall.

But when after the banquet Arthur began, according to ancient royal custom, to bestow great boons and fiefs whom he would, they all with one accord rose up, and rnfully refused his gifts, crying that they would take hing from a beardless boy come of low or unknown th, but would instead give him good gifts of hard sword- kes between neck and shoulders.

Whereat arose a deadly tumult in the hall, and eve man there made him ready to fight. But Arthur leap up as a flame of fire against them, and all his knigh and barons drawing their swords, rushed after him up them and began a full sore battle; and presently the kin party prevailed, and drave the rebels from the hall a from the city, closing the gates behind them; and Ki Arthur brake his sword upon them in his eagerness a rage.

But amongst them were six kings of great renown a might, who more than all raged against Arthur and d termined to destroy him, namely, King Lot, King Nante King Urien, King Carados, King Yder, and King Angu sant. These six, therefore, joining their armies togeth laid close siege to the city of Caerleon, wherefrom Ki Arthur had so shamefully driven them.

And after fifteen days Merlin came suddenly into th camp and asked them what this treason meant. Then declared to them that Arthur was no base adventurer, King Uther's son, whom they were bound to serve a honour even though Heaven had not vouchsafed the w drous miracle of the sword. Some of the kings, when t heard Merlin speak thus, marvelled and believed him; others, as King Lot, laughed him and his words to sc and mocked him for a conjurer and wizard. But it agreed with Merlin that Arthur should come forth speak with the kings.

So he went forth to them to the city gate, and v him the archbishop and Merlin, and Sir Key, Sir Bras and a great company of others. And he spared them in his speech, but spoke to them as king and chieftain, ing them plainly he would make them all bow to hi he lived, unless they chose to do him homage there

en; and so they parted in great wrath, and each side
med in haste.

"What will ye do?" said Merlin to the kings; "ye had
st hold your hands, for were ye ten times as many ye
ould not prevail."

"Shall we be afraid of a dream-reader?" quoth King Lot
scorn.

With that Merlin vanished away and came to King
thur.

Then Arthur said to Merlin, "I have need now of a
ord that shall chastise these rebels terribly."

"Come then with me," said Merlin, "for hard by there
a sword that I can gain for thee."

So they rode out that night till they came to a fair
d broad lake, and in the midst of it King Arthur saw an
n thrust up, clothed in white samite, and holding a great
ord in the hand.

'Lo! yonder is the sword I spoke of," said Merlin.

Then saw they a damsel floating on the lake in the moon-
ht. "What damsel is that?" said the king.

'The lady of the lake," said Merlin; "for upon this lake
ere is a rock, and on the
k a noble palace, where
abideth, and she will
me towards thee presently,
en thou shalt ask her
rteously for the sword."
Therewith the damsel
me to King Arthur, and
uted him, and he saluted
, and said, "Lady, what
ord is that the arm holdeth above the water? I would
t it were mine, for I have no sword."

KING ARTHUR

"Sir King," said the lady of the lake, "that sword mine, and if thou wilt give me in return a gift whenev I shall ask it of thee, thou shalt have it."

"By my faith," said he, "I will give thee any gift th thou shalt ask."

"Well," said the damsel, "go into yonder barge, and ro thyself unto the sword, and take it and the scabbard wi thee, and I will ask my gift of thee when I see my time."

So King Arthur and Merlin alighted, and tied the horses to two trees, and King Arthur went into the barg and when he came to the sword that the hand held, Ki Arthur took it by the handle and bore it with him, and t arm and hand went down under the water; and so he ca back to land, and with Merlin rode again to Caerleon.

On the morrow Merlin bade King Arthur to set fierce on the enemy; and in the meanwhile three hundred go knights went over to King Arthur from the rebels' si Then at the spring of day, when they had scarce left th tents, he fell on them with might and main, and Sir Ba waine, Sir Key, and Sir Brastias slew on the right ha and on the left marvellously; and ever in the thickest the fight King Arthur raged like a young lion, and l on with his sword, and did wondrous deeds of arms, the joy and admiration of the knights and barons who held him.

Then King Lot, King Carados, and the King of Hundred Knights—who also was with them—going rou to the rear, set on King Arthur fiercely from behind; Arthur, turning to his knights, fought ever in the fo most press until his horse was slain beneath him. At th King Lot rode furiously at him, and smote him down; rising straightway, and being set again on horseback, drew his sword Excalibur that he had gained by Me from the lady of the lake, which, shining brightly as

HOW KING ARTHUR RECEIVED THE SWORD "EXCALIBUR"

ght of thirty torches, dazzled the eyes of his enemies. nd therewith falling on them afresh with all his knights, drove them back and slew them in great numbers, and erlin by his arts scattered among them fire and pitchy noke, so that they broke and fled. Then all the common eople of Caerleon, seeing them give way, rose up with e accord, and rushed at them with clubs and staves, d chased them far and wide, and slew many great knights d lords, and the remainder of them fled and were seen no ore. Thus won King Arthur his first battle and put his emies to shame.

But the six kings, though sorely routed, prepared for new war, and joining to themselves five others swore gether that, whether for weal or woe, they would keep eadfast alliance till they had destroyed King Arthur. nen, with a host of 50,000 men-at-arms on horseback, and ,000 foot, they were soon ready, and sent forth their re-riders, and drew from the northern country towards ing Arthur, to the castle of Bedgraine.

But he by Merlin's counsel had sent over sea to King an of Benwick and King Bors of Gaul, praying them come and help him in his wars, and promising to help em in return against King Claudas, their foe. To which ose kings made answer that they would joyfully fulfil s wish, and shortly after came to London with 300 ights, well arrayed for both peace and war, leaving be- nd them a great army on the other side of the sea till ey had consulted with King Arthur and his ministers w they might best dispose of it.

And Merlin being asked for his advice and help, agreed go himself and fetch it over sea to England, which in e night he did; and brought with him 10,000 horsemen d led them northward privately to the forest of Bed- aine, and there lodged them in a valley secretly.

KING ARTHU

Then, by the counsel of Merlin, when they knew whi way the eleven kings would ride and sleep, King Arth with Kings Ban and Bors made themselves ready w their army for the fight, having yet but 30,000 men, cou ing the 10,000 who had come from Gaul.

"Now shall ye do my advice," said Merlin; "I wou that King Ban and King Bors, with all their fellowship 10,000 men, were led to ambush in this wood ere daylig and stir not therefrom until the battle hath been lo waged. And thou, Lord Arthur, at the spring of day dr forth thine army before the enemy, and dress the bat so that they may at once see all thy host, for they will the more rash and hardy when they see you have but 20,0 men."

To this the three knights and the barons heartily co sented, and it was done as Merlin had devised. So the morrow when the hosts beheld each other, the h of the north was greatly cheered to find so few led against them.

Then gave King Arthur the command to Sir Ulfius a Sir Brastias to take 3,000 men-at-arms, and to open batt They therefore setting fiercely on the enemy slew th on the right hand and the left till it was wonderful to their slaughter.

When the eleven kings beheld so small a band doing su mighty deeds of arms they were ashamed, and charg them fiercely in return. Then was Sir Ulfius' horse sl under him; but he fought well and marvellously on f against Duke Eustace and King Clarience, who set up him grievously, till Sir Brastias, seeing his great pe pricked towards them swiftly, and so smote the du through with his spear that horse and man fell down a rolled over. Whereat King Clarience turned upon Brastias, and rushing furiously together they each unhor

e other and fell both to the ground, and there lay a long me stunned, their horses' knees being cut to the bone. hen came Sir Key the seneschal with six companions, and d wondrous well, till the eleven kings went out against em and overthrew Sir Griflet and Sir Lucas the butler. nd when Sir Key saw Sir Griflet unhorsed and on foot, e rode against King Nanters hotly and smote him down, nd led his horse to Griflet and horsed him again; with ne same spear did Sir Key smite down King Lot and ounded him full sore.

But seeing that, the King of the Hundred Knights ashed at Sir Key and overthrew him in return, and took s horse and gave it to ing Lot. And when Sir riflet saw Sir Key's mis-hance, he set his spear in st, and riding at a mighty an-at-arms, he cast him own headlong and caught s horse and led it straight-ay to Sir Key.

But now the battle was rowing perilous and hard, d both sides fought with ge and fury. And Sir lfius and Sir Brastias were both afoot and in great danger their death, and foully stained and trampled under rses' feet. Then King Arthur, putting spurs to his horse, shed forward like a lion into the midst of all the *mêlée,* d singling out King Cradlemont of North Wales, smote n through the left side and overthrew him, and taking s horse by the rein he brought it to Sir Ulfius in haste and d, "Take this horse, mine old friend, for thou hast great ed of one, and charge by side of me." And even as he

spoke he saw Sir Ector, Sir Key's father, smitten to the earth by the King of the Hundred Knights, and his horse taken to King Cradlemont.

But when King Arthur saw him ride upon Sir Ector's horse his wrath was very great, and with his sword he smote King Cradlemont upon the helm, and shore off the fourth part thereof and of the shield, and drave the sword onward to the horse's neck and slew the horse, and hurled the king upon the ground.

And now the battle waxed so great and furious that all the noise and

sound thereof rang out by water and by wood, so that Kings Ban and Bors, with all their knights and men-at-arms in ambush, hearing the tumult and the cries, trembled and shook for eagerness, and scarce could stay in secret, but made them ready for the fray and dressed their shields and harness.

But when King Arthur saw the fury of the enemy, he raged like a mad lion, and stirred and drove his horse now here, now there, to the right hand and to the left, and stayed not in his wrath till he had slain full twenty knights. He wounded also King Lot so

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sorely in the shoulder that he left the field, and in grea pain and dolour cried out to the other kings, "Do ye as I d vise, or we shall be destroyed. I, with the King of the Hu dred Knights, King Anguisant, King Yder, and the Duk of Cambinet, will take fifteen thousand men and make a ci cuit, meanwhile that ye do hold the battle with twelve thou sand. Then coming suddenly we will fall fiercely on the from behind and put them to the rout, but else shall v never stand against them."

So Lot and four kings departed with their party to or side, and the six other kings dressed their ranks again King Arthur and fought long and stoutly.

But now Kings Ban and Bors, with all their army fres and eager, broke from their ambush and met face to fa the five kings and their host as they came round behin and then began a frantic struggle with breaking of spea and clashing of swords and slaying of men and horse Anon King Lot, espying in the midst King Bors, cried o in great dismay, "Our Lady now defend us from our dea and fearful wounds; our peril groweth great, for yond cometh one of the worshipfullest kings and best knigh in all the world."

"Who is he?" said the King of the Hundred Knigh

"It is King Bors of Gaul," replied King Lot, "and mu I marvel how he may have come with all his host in this land without our knowledge."

"Aha!" cried King Carados, "I will encounter with th king if ye will rescue me when there is need."

"Ride on," said they.

So King Carados and all his host rode softly till th came within a bow-shot of King Bors, and then both hos spurring their horses to their greatest swiftness, rushed each other. And King Bors encountered in the onset w a knight, and struck him through with a spear, so th

fell dead upon the earth; then drawing his sword, he
l such mighty feats of arms that all who saw him gazed
th wonder. Anon King Ban came also forth upon the
ld, with all his knights, and added yet more fury, sound,
l slaughter, till at length both hosts of the eleven kings
gan to quake, and drawing all together into one body,
y prepared to meet the worst, while a great multitude
eady fled.

Then said King Lot, "Lords, we must take yet other
ans, or worse loss still awaits us. See ye not what people
have lost in waiting on the footmen, and that it costs
horsemen to save one of them? Therefore it is my
unsel to put away our footmen from us, for it is almost
ght, and King Arthur will not stay to slaughter them.
they can save their lives in this great wood hard by.
ien let us gather into one band all the horsemen that re-
in, and whoso breaketh rank or leaveth us, let him be
aightway slain by him that seeth him, for it is better
it we slay a coward than through a coward be all slain.
ow say ye?" said King Lot; "answer me, all ye kings."
'It is well said," replied they all.

And swearing they would never fail each other, they
nded and set right their armour and their shields, and
k new spears and set them steadfastly against their
ghs, waiting, and so stood still as a clump of trees stands
the plain; and no assaults could shake them, they held
hard together; which when King Arthur saw he mar-
lled greatly, and was very wroth. "Yet," cried he, "I
y not blame them, by my faith, for they do as brave men
ght to do, and are the best fighting men and knights of
ost prowess that I ever saw or heard tell of." And so
d also Kings Ban and Bors, and praised them greatly for
eir noble chivalry.

But now came forty noble knights out of King Arthur's

host, and prayed that he would suffer them to break th enemy. And when they were allowed, they rode fort with their spears upon their thighs, and spurred thei horses to their hottest. Then the eleven kings, with a part of their knights, rushed with set spears as fast and mightil to meet them; and when they were encountered, all th crash and splinter of their spears and armour rang with mighty din, and so fierce and bloody was their onset tha in all that day there had been no such cruel press, an rage, and smiting. At that same moment rode fiercely int the thickest of the struggle King Arthur and Kings Ba and Bors, and slew downright on both hands right an left, until their horses went in blood up to the fetlocks.

And while the slaughter and the noise and shouting wer at their greatest, suddenly there came down through th battle Merlin the Wizard, upon a great black horse, an riding to King Arthur, he cried out, "Alas, my Lord! wi ye have never done? Of sixty thousand have ye left bu fifteen thousand men alive. Is it not time to stay this slay ing? for God is ill pleased with ye that ye have never ende and yonder kings shall not be altogether overthrown th time. But if ye fall upon them any more, the fortune this day will turn, and go to them. Withdraw, Lor therefore, to thy lodging, and there now take thy rest, fo to-day thou hast won a great victory, and overcome th noblest chivalry of all the world. And now for man years those kings shall not disturb thee. Therefore, I te thee, fear them no more, for now they are sore beate and have nothing left them but their honour; and wh shouldst thou slay them to take that?"

Then said King Arthur, "Thou sayest well, and I wi take thy counsel." With that he cried out, "Ho!" for th battle to cease, and sent forth heralds through the field stay more fighting. And gathering all the spoil, he ga

ND HIS KNIGHTS

ot amongst his own host, but to Kings Ban and Bors
l all their knights and men-at-arms, that he might treat
m with the greater courtesy as strangers.

Then Merlin took his leave of Arthur and the two other
gs, and went to see his master, Blaise, a holy hermit,
elling in Northumberland, who had nourished him
ough all his youth. And Blaise was passing glad to see
n, for there was a great love ever between them; and
rlin told him how King Arthur had sped in the battle,
l how it had ended; and told him the names of every king
l knight of worship who was there. So Blaise wrote
vn the battle, word for word, as Merlin told him; and
the same way ever after, all the battles of King Arthur's
s Merlin caused Blaise, his master, to record.

CHAPTER III

THE ADVENTURE OF THE QUESTING BEAST—KING ARTHU DRIVES THE SAXONS FROM THE REALM—THE BATTLES OF CELIDON FOREST AND BADON HILL

ANON, thereafter, came word to King Arthur th Ryence, King of North Wales, was making w upon King Leodegrance of Camelgard; where he was passing wroth, for he loved Leodegrance well, a hated Ryence. So he departed with Kings Ban and Bo and twenty thousand men, and came to Camelgard, a rescued Leodegrance, and slew ten thousand of Ryenc men and put him to flight. Then Leodegrance made great festival to the three kings, and treated them wi every manner of mirth and pleasure which could be devise And there had King Arthur the first sight of Guineve daughter of Leodegrance, whom in the end he married, shall be told hereafter.

Then did Kings Ban and Bors take leave, and went their own country, where King Claudas worked great m chief. And King Arthur would have gone with them, b they refused him, saying, "Nay, ye shall not at this tir for ye have yet much to do in these lands of your ow and we with the riches we have won here by your gi shall hire many good knights, and, by the grace of G withstand the malice of King Claudas; and if we ha need we will send to ye for succour; and likewise ye, if have need, send for us, and we will not tarry, by the faith our bodies."

When the two kings had left, King Arthur rode to Ca leon, and thither came to him his half-sister Belisent, w to King Lot, sent as a messenger, but in truth to espy power; and with her came a noble retinue, and also

ARTHUR AND THE QUESTING BEAST

r sons—Gawain, Gaheris, Agravaine, and Gareth. But
en she saw King Arthur and his nobleness, and all the
endour of his knights and service, she forbore to spy
on him as a foe, and told him of her husband's plots
ainst him and his throne. And the king, not knowing
t she was his half-sister, made great court to her; and
ng full of admiration for her beauty, loved her out of
asure, and kept her a long season at Caerleon. Where-
e her husband, King Lot, was more than ever King
thur's enemy, and hated him till death with a passing
eat hatred.

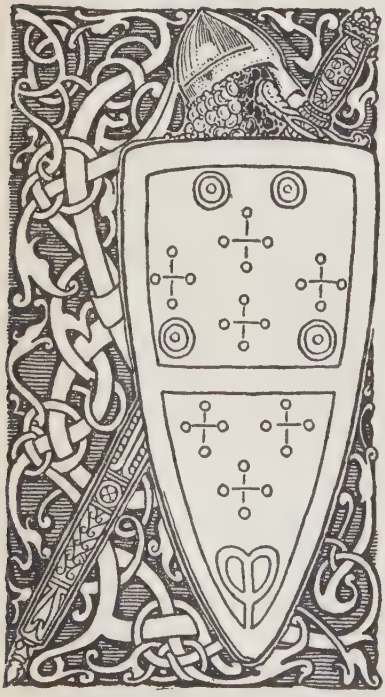
At that time King Arthur had a marvellous dream, which
ve him great disquietness of heart. He dreamed that
whole land was full of many fiery griffins and serpents,
ich burnt and slew the people everywhere; and then that
himself fought with them, and that they did him mighty
uries, and wounded him nigh to death, but that at last
overcame and slew them all. When he woke, he sat
great heaviness of spirit and pensiveness, thinking what
s dream might signify, but by-and-by, when he could by
means satisfy himself what it might mean, to rid him-
f of all his thoughts of it, he made ready with a great
mpany to ride out hunting.

As soon as he was in the forest, the king saw a great
rt before him, and spurred his horse, and rode along
gerly after it, and chased until his horse lost breath and
l down dead from under him. Then, seeing the hart
aped and his horse dead, he sat down by a fountain, and
l into deep thought again. And as he sat there alone,
thought he heard the noise of hounds, as it were some
rty couple in number, and looking up he saw coming
wards him the strangest beast that ever he had seen or
rd tell of, which ran towards the fountain and drank of
water. Its head was like a serpent's, with a leopard's

body and a lion's tail, and flames poured from its nostril and the noise was in its belly, as it were the baying or ques ing of thirty couple of hounds. While it drank there w no noise within it; but presently, having finished, it departe with a greater sound than ever.

The king was amazed at all this; but being great wearied, he fell asleep, and was before long waked up b a knight on foot, who said, "Knight, full of thought an sleepy, tell me if thou sawest a strange beast pass th way?"

"Such a one I saw," said King Arthur to the knigh "but that is now two miles distant at the least. Wh would you with that beast?"



"Sir," said the knight, " have followed it for a lon time, and have killed m horse, and would to heave I had another to pursue m quest withal."

At that moment came yeoman with another hor for the king, which, whe the knight saw, he earnest prayed to be given hi "For I have followed th quest," said he, "twel months, and either I sha achieve him or bleed of t best blood of my body."

It was King Pellinore w at that time followed t questing beast, but neither nor King Arthur knew ea other.

ND HIS KNIGHTS

Sir Knight," said King Arthur, "leave that quest and
er me to have it, and I will follow it other twelve
nths."
Ah, fool," said the knight, "thy desire is utterly in vain,
it shall never be achieved but by me, or by my next of
"
herewith he started to the king's horse, and mounted
the saddle, crying out, "Grammercy, this horse is
e!"
Well," said the king, "thou mayest take my horse by
e, and I will not say nay; but till we prove whether
I or I be best on horseback, I shall not rest content."
Seek me here," said the knight, "whenever thou wilt,
here by this fountain thou shalt find me"; and so he
ed forth on his way.
hen sat King Arthur in a deep fit of study, and bade
yeoman fetch him yet another horse as quickly as he
d. And when he left him all alone came Merlin,
uised as a child of fourteen years of age, and saluted
king, and asked him why he was so pensive and heavy.
I may well be pensive and heavy," he replied, "for
even now I have seen the strangest sight I ever saw."
That know I well," said Merlin, "as well as thyself,
also all thy thoughts; but thou art foolish to take
ght, for it will not amend thee. Also I know what
I art, and know thy father and thy mother."
That is false," said King Arthur; "how shouldst thou
w? thy years are not enough."
Yea," said Merlin, "but I know better than thou how
I wast born, and better than any man living."
I will not believe thee," said King Arthur, and was
th with the child.
o Merlin departed, and came again in the likeness of
old man of fourscore years of age: and the king was

glad at his coming, for he seemed wise and venerab
Then said the old man, "Why art thou so sad?"

"For divers reasons," said King Arthur; "for I ha
seen strange things to-day, and but this moment there w
here a child who told me things beyond his years to know

"Yea," said the old man, "but he told thee truth, a
more he would have told thee hadst thou suffered hi
But I will tell thee wherefore thou art sad, for thou h
done a thing of late for which God is displeased with th
and what it is thou knowest in thy heart, though no m
else may know."

"What art thou," said King Arthur, starting up all pa
"that tellest me these tidings?"

"I am Merlin," said he, "and I was he in the child's li
ness, also."

"Ah," said King Arthur, "thou art a marvellous a
right fearful man, and I would ask and tell thee ma
things this day."

As they talked came one with the king's horses, and
King Arthur mounting one, and Merlin another, they r
together to Caerleon; and Merlin prophesied to Arth
of his death, and also foretold his own end.

And now King Arthur, having utterly dispersed a
overwhelmed those kings who had so long delayed
coronation, turned all his mind to overthrow the Sa
heathens who yet in many places spoiled the land. C
ing together, therefore, his knights and men-at-arms,
rode with all his hosts to York, where Colgrin,
Saxon, lay with a great army; and there he fough
mighty battle, long and bloody, and drove him into
city, and besieged him. Then Baldulph, Colgrin's brot
came secretly with six thousand men to assail King Art
and to raise the siege. But King Arthur was aware
him, and sent six hundred horsemen and three thous

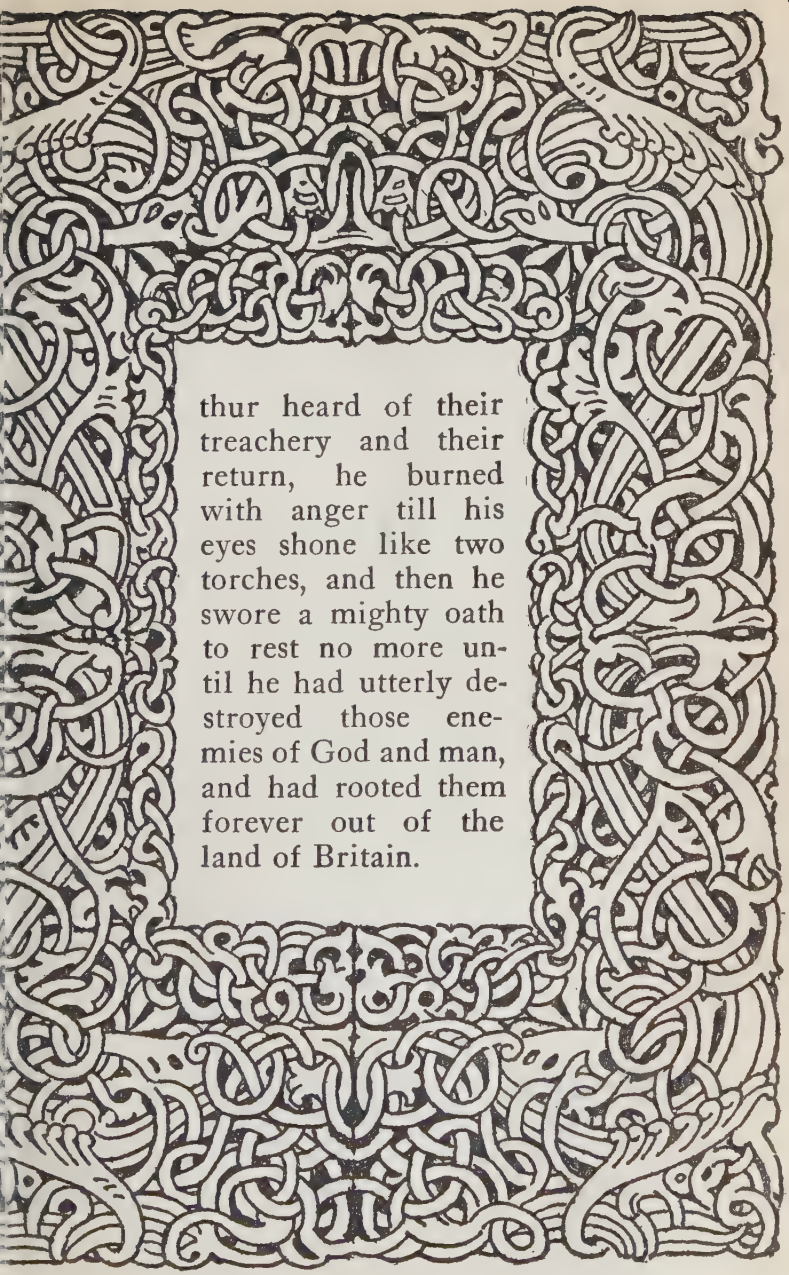
t to meet and fall on him instead. This therefore they , encountering them at midnight, and utterly defeated m, till they fled away for life. But Baldulph, full of ef, resolved to share his brother's peril; wherefore he ved his head and beard, and disguised himself as a er, and so passed through King Arthur's camp, singing . playing on a harp, till by degrees he drew near to city walls, where presently he made himself known, . was drawn up by ropes into the town.

Anon, while Arthur closely watched the city, came news t full six hundred ships had landed countless swarms Saxons, under Cheldric, on the eastern coast. At that raised the siege, and marched straight to London, and re increased his army, and took counsel with his barons w to drive the Saxons from the land for evermore.

Then with his nephew, Hoel, King of the Armorican tons, who came with a great force to help him, King hur, with a mighty multitude of barons, knights, and ting men, went swiftly up to Lincoln, which the Saxons besieging. And there he fought a passing fierce bat- and made grievous slaughter, killing above six thousand n, till the main body of them turned and fled. But he sued them hotly into the wood of Celidon, where, shel- ng themselves among the trees from his arrows, they le a stand, and for a long season bravely defended them- es. Anon he ordered all the trees in that part of the st to be cut down, leaving no shelter or ambush; and h their trunks and branches made a mighty barricade, ch shut them in and hindered their escape. After e days, brought nigh to death by famine, they offered give up their wealth of gold and silver spoils, and to art forthwith in their empty ships; moreover, to pay trib- to King Arthur when they reached their home, and eave him hostages till all was paid.

This offer, therefore, he accepted, and suffered them to depart. But when they had been a few hours at sea, they repented of their shameful flight, and turned their ships back again, and landing at Totnes, ravaged all the land as far as the Severn, and, burning and slaying on all sides, bent their steps towards Bath.

When King Ar-



thur heard of their treachery and their return, he burned with anger till his eyes shone like two torches, and then he swore a mighty oath to rest no more until he had utterly destroyed those enemies of God and man, and had rooted them forever out of the land of Britain.

Then marching hotly with his armies on to Bath, he cr
aloud to them, "Since these detestable and impi
heathens disdain to keep their faith with me, I, to k
faith with God, to whom I sware to cherish and def
this realm, will now this day avenge on them the blood
all that they have slain in Britain!"

In like manner after him spoke the archbishop, sta
ing upon a hill, and crying that to-day they should fi
both for their country and for Paradise, "For whoso,"
said, "shall in this holy war be slain, the angels shall fo
with receive him; for death in this cause shall be pena
and absolution for all sins."

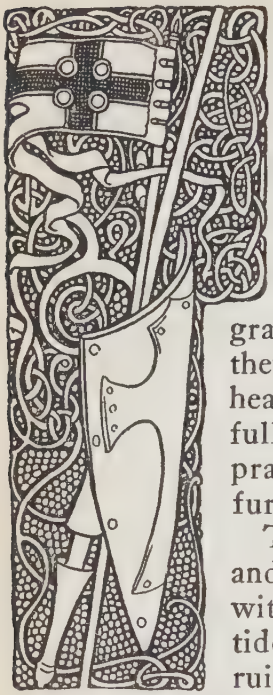
At these words every man in the whole army raged w
hatred, and pressed eagerly to rush upon those sava

Anon King Arthur, dressed in armour shining with g
and jewels, and wearing on his head a helmet with a gol
dragon, took a shield painted with the likeness of
blessed Mary. Then girding on Excalibur and tak
in his right hand his great lance Ron, he placed his r
in order and led them out against the enemy, who st
for battle on the slope of Badon Hill, ranged in the f
of a wedge, as their custom was. And they, resisting
the onslaughts of King Arthur and his host, made
day a stout defence, and at night lay down upon the l

But on the next day Arthur led his army once a
to the attack, and with wounds and slaughter such as
man had ever seen before, he drove the heathen step
step before him, backwards and upwards, till he st
with all his noblest knights upon the summit of the hil

And then men saw him, "red as the rising sun from s
to plume," lift up his sword, and, kneeling, kiss the c
of it; and after, rising to his feet, set might and main
all his fellowship upon the foe, till, as a troop of l
roaring for their prey, they drove them like a scatt

along the plains, and cut them down till they could
ıo more for weariness.
ıat day King Arthur by himself alone slew with his
d Excalibur four hundred and seventy heathens.
rin also, and his brother Baldulph, were slain.
ıen the king bade Cador, Duke of Cornwall, follow
dric, the chief leader, and the remnant of his hosts,
the uttermost. He, therefore, when he had first seized
fleet, and filled it with chosen men, to beat them back
ı they should fly to it at last, chased them and slew
ı without mercy so long as he could overtake them.
though they crept with trembling hearts for shelter
ıe coverts of the woods and dens of mountains, yet
so they found no safety, for Cador slew them, even
ɔy one. Last of all he caught and slew Cheldric him-
and slaughtering a great multitude took hostages for
surrender of the rest.
eanwhile, King Arthur turned from Badon Hill, and
l his nephew Hoel from the Scots and Picts, who be-
d him in Alclud. And when he had defeated them
ree sore battles, he drove them before him to a lake,
h was one of the most wondrous lakes in all the world,
was fed by sixty rivers, and had sixty islands, and sixty
s, and on every island sixty eagles' nests. But King
ur with a great fleet sailed round the rivers and be-
d them in the lake for fifteen days, so that many thou-
s died of hunger.
ıon the King of Ireland came with an army to relieve
; but Arthur, turning on him fiercely, routed him,
compelled him to retreat in terror to his land. Then
ursued his purpose, which was no less than to destroy
ace of Picts and Scots, who, beyond memory, had been
seless torment to the Britons by their barbarous malice.
bitterly, therefore, did he treat them, giving quarter



to none, that at length the bishops
that miserable country with the cle
met together, and, bearing all the h
relics, came barefooted to the king
pray his mercy for their people.
soon as they were led before him th
fell down upon their knees, and pi
ously besought him to spare the f
survivors of their countrymen, a
grant them any corner of the land wh
they might live in peace. When he t
heard them, and knew that he had n
fully punished them, he consented to th
prayer, and withdrew his hosts from a
further slaughter.

Then turned he back to his own rea
and came to York for Christmas, and th
with high solemnity observed that h
tide; and being passing grieved to see
ruin of the churches and houses, which
rage of the pagans had destroyed, he rebuilt them, and
stored the city to its ancient happy state.

And on a certain day, as the king sat with his bar
there came into the court a squire on horseback, carry
a knight before him wounded to the death, and told
king that hard by in the forest was a knight who had rea
up a pavilion by the fountain, "and hath slain my mas
a valiant knight, whose name was Nirles; wherefor
beseech thee, Lord, my master may be buried, and
some good knight may avenge his death."

At that stepped forth a squire named Griflet, who
very young, being of the same age with King Arthur,
besought the king, for all the service he had done, to
him knighthood.

ND HIS KNIGHTS

Thou art full young and tender of age," said King Ar-
, "to take so high an order upon thee."
Sir," said Griflet, "I beseech thee make me a knight";
Merlin also advising the king to grant his request,
ll," said Arthur, "be it then so," and knighted him
nwith. Then said he to him, "Since I have granted
this favour, thou must in turn grant me a gift."
Whatsoever thou wilt, my lord," replied Sir Griflet.
Promise me," said King Arthur, "by the faith of thy
, that when thou hast jousted with this knight at the
tain, thou wilt return to me straightway, unless he slay
."
promise," said Sir Griflet; and taking his horse
aste, he dressed his shield, and took a spear in his
l and rode full gallop till he came to the fountain, by
side of which he saw a rich pavilion, and a great
e standing well saddled and bridled, and on a tree
by there hung a shield of many colours and a long
e.

hen Sir Griflet smote upon the shield with the butt of
spear until he cast it to the ground. At that a knight
e out of the pavilion and said, "Fair knight, why
re ye down my shield?"
Because," said Griflet,
would joust with thee."
It were better not," re-
d the knight; "for thou
young and but lately
le a knight, and thy
ngth is small compared
ine."
For all that," said Sir
flet, "I will joust with

"I am full loth," replied the knight; "but if I mu
must."

Then did they wheel their horses far apart, and runn
them together, the strange knight shivered Sir Grif
spear to fragments, and smote him through the shield
the left side, and broke his own spear into Sir Griflet's bo
so that the truncheon stuck there, and Sir Griflet and
horse fell down. But when the strange knight saw
overthrown, he was sore grieved, and hastily alighted,
he thought that he had slain him. Then he unlaced
helm and gave him air, and tended him carefully till
came out of his swoon, and leaving the truncheon of
spear in his body, he set him upon horse, and commen
him to God, and said he had a mighty heart, and if
lived would prove a passing good knight. And so Sir G
flet rode to the court, where, by aid of good physicians
was healed in time and his life saved.

At that same time there came before the king twelve
men, ambassadors from Lucius Tiberius, Emperor of Ro
and demanded of Arthur tribute unto Cæsar for his rea
or else, said they, the emperor would destroy both him
his land. To whom King Arthur answered that he o
the emperor no tribute, nor would send him any; but
he, "On a fair field I will pay him his proper tribute—w
a sharp spear and sword; and by my father's soul that t
ute shall he take from me, whether he will or not." So
ambassadors departed passing wroth, and King Arthur
as wroth as they.

But on the morrow of Sir Griflet's hurt, the king c
manded to take his horse and armour secretly outside
city walls before sunrise of the next morning, and, risi
long while before dawn, he mounted up and took his sh
and spear, and bade his chamberlain tarry till he c
again; but he forbore to take Excalibur, for he had g

r safety into charge of his sister, Queen Morgan le

And as the king rode at a soft pace he saw suddenly
e villains chasing Merlin and making to attack and slay

Clapping spurs to his horse, he rushed towards them,
cried out in a terrible voice, "Flee, churls, or take your
hs"; but they, as soon as they perceived a knight, fled
with the haste of hares.

O Merlin," said the king; "here hadst thou been killed,
ite thy many crafts, had I not chanced to pass."

Not so," said Merlin, "for when I would, I could have
d myself; but thou art nearer to thy death than I, for
out special help from Heaven thou ridest now towards
grave."

nd as they were thus talking, they came to the fountain
he rich pavilion pitched beside it, and saw a knight sit-
all armed on a chair in the opening of the tent. "Sir
ght," said King Arthur, "for what cause abidest thou
? to joust with any knight that passeth by? If so, I
on thee to quit that custom."

That custom," said the knight, "have I followed and will
w, let whosoever will say nay, and if any is aggrieved
let him who will amend it."

will amend it," said King Arthur.

And I will defend it," answered the knight.

hen the knight mounted his horse and made himself
y, and charging at each other they met so hard that both
lances splintered into pieces. Then King Arthur
his sword, but the knight cried out, "Not so; but let
n another tilt together with sharp spears."

would with a good will," said King Arthur; "but I
no more spears."

have enough of spears," replied the knight, and called
uire, who brought two good new lances.

hen spurring their horses, they rushed together with all

their might, and broke each one his own spear short off his hand. Then the king again put his hand to his swor but the knight once more cried out, "Nay, yet abide awhil ye are the best jouster that I ever met with; for the love knighthood, let us joust yet once again."

So once again they tilted with their fullest force, and th time King Arthur's spear was shivered, but the knight's he whole, and drove so furiously against the king that both h horse and he were hurled to the ground.

At that, King Arthur was enraged and drew his swo and said, "I will attack thee now, Sir Knight, on foot, f on horseback I have lost the honour."

"I will be on horseback," said the knight. But when saw him come on foot, he lighted from his horse, thinki it shame to have so great advantage.

And then began they a strong battle, with many gr strokes and grievous blows, and so hewed with their swor that the fragments of their armour flew about the fields, a both so bled that all the ground around was like a marsh blood. Thus they fought long and mightily, and an after brief rest, fell to again, and so hurtled together l two wild boars that they both rolled to the ground. At l their swords clashed furiously together, and the knigh sword shivered the king's in two.

Then said the knight, "Now art thou in my power, to sa thee or to slay. Yield therefore as defeated, and a recre knight, or thou shalt surely die."

"As for death," replied King Arthur, "welcome be when it cometh; but as for yielding me to thee as a recre because of this poor accident upon my sword, I had liefer die than be so shamed."

So saying, he sprang on the knight, and took him by middle and threw him down, and tore off his helm. the knight, being a huge man, wrestled and struggled i

W THE BLACK KNIGHT WAS STRUCK
WN BY MERLIN TO SAVE KING ARTHUR

enzy with the king until he brought him under, and tore
f his helm in turn, and would have smitten off his head.
At that came Merlin and said, "Knight, hold thy hand,
r if thou slayest yonder knight, thou puttest all this realm
greater loss and damage than ever realm was in; for he is
man of greater worship than thou dreamest of."
"Who then is he?" cried the knight.
"Arthur Pendragon!" answered Merlin.
Then would he have slain him for dread of his wrath,
t Merlin cast a spell upon the knight, so that he fell
ddenly to the earth in a deep sleep. Then raising up
e king, he took the knight's horse for himself and rode
vay.
"Alas," said King Arthur, "what hast thou done, Mer-
? hast thou slain this good knight by thy crafts? There
ver lived a better knight; I had rather lose my kingdom
r a year than have him dead."
"Be not afraid," said Merlin; "he is more whole and
nd than thou art, and is but in a sleep, wherefrom
three hours' time he will awake. I told thee what a
ight he was, and how near thou wast to death. There
eth not a better knight than he in all the world, and
reafter he shall do thee good service. His name is King
llinore, and he shall have two sons, who shall be pass-
g valiant men, and, save one another, shall have no equal
prowess and in purity of life. The one shall be named
rcival, and the other Lamoracke of Wales."
So they rode on to Caerleon, and all the knights grieved
atly when they heard of this adventure, that the king
uld jeopardise his person thus alone. Yet could they not
de their joy at serving under such a noble chief, who ad-
ntured his own life as much as did the poorest knight
ong them all.

CHAPTER IV

KING ARTHUR CONQUERS IRELAND AND NORWAY, SLAYS THE GIANT OF ST. MICHAEL'S MOUNT, AND CONQUERS GAUL—THE ADVENTURES OF SIR BALIN

THE land of Britain being now in peace, and man great and valiant knights therein ready to take par in whatsoever battles or adventures might arise King Arthur resolved to follow all his enemies to thei own coasts. Anon he fitted out a great fleet, and sailin first to Ireland, in one battle he miserably routed the peopl of the country. The King of Ireland also he took prisone and forced all earls and barons to pay him homage.

Having conquered Ireland, he went next to Iceland an subdued it also, and the winter being then arrived, returne to Britain.

In the next year he set forth to Norway, whence mar times the heathen had descended on the British coast for he was determined to give so terrible a lesson to tho savages as should be told through all their tribes both f and near, and make his name fearful to them.

As soon as he was come, Riculf, the king, with all t power of that country, met and gave him battle; bu after mighty slaughter, the Britons had at length the a

ntage, and slew Riculf and a countless multitude be-
es.

Having thus defeated them, they set the cities on fire,
spersed the country people, and pursued the victory till
ey had reduced all Norway, as also Dacia, under the
minion of King Arthur.

Now, therefore, having thus chastised those pagans who
long had harassed Britain, and put his yoke upon them,
voyaged on to Gaul, being steadfastly set upon defeat-
g the Roman governor of that province, and so beginning
make good the threats which he had sent the emperor
his ambassadors.

So soon as he was landed on the shores of Gaul, there
me to him a countryman who told him of a fearful giant
the land of Brittany, who had slain, murdered, and
voured many people, and had lived seven years upon
ung children only, "insomuch," said the man, "that all
children of the country are destroyed; and but the
er day he seized upon our duchess, as she rode out with
men, and took her away to his lodging in a cave of
nountain, and though five hundred people followed her,
could they give her no help or rescue, but left her
ieking and crying lamentably in the giant's hands; and,
rd, she is thy nephew Hoel's wife, who is of thy near kin-
d; wherefore, as thou art a rightful king, have pity on
s lady; and as thou art a valiant conqueror, avenge us
deliver us."

"Alas!" said King Arthur, "this is a great mischief that
tell of. I had rather than the best realm I have, that
ad rescued that lady ere the giant laid his hand on
; but tell me now, good fellow, canst thou bring me
ere this giant haunteth?"

"Yea, Lord!" replied the man; "lo, yonder, where thou
st two great fires, there shalt thou find him, and more

treasure also than is in all Gaul besides."

Then the King returned to his tent, and, calling Sir Key and Sir Bedwin, desired them to get horses ready for himself and them, for that after even-song he would ride a pilgrimage with them alone to St. Michael's Mount. So in the evening they departed, and rode as fast as they could till they came near the mount, and there alighted; and the king commanded the two knights to await him at the hill foot, while he went up alone.

Then he ascended the mountain till he came to a great fire. And there he found a sorrowful widow wringing her hands and weeping miserably, sitting by a new-made grave. And saluting her, King Arthur prayed her wherefore she made such heavy lamentations.

"Sir Knight," she said, "speak softly, for yonder is a devil, who, if he hear thy voice, will come and straightway slay thee. Alas! what dost thou here? Fifty such men as thou were powerless to resist him. Here lieth dead my lady, Duchess of Brittany, wife to Sir Hoel, who was the fairest lady in the world, foully and shamefully slaughtered by that fiend! Beware that thou go not too nigh, for he hath overcome and vanquished fifteen kings, and hath made himself a coat of precious stones, embroidered with their beards; but if thou art so hardy, and wilt speak with him, at yonder great fire he is at supper."

"Well," said King Arthur, "I will accomplish mine errand, for all thy fearful words"; and so went forth to the

AND HIS KNIGHTS

st of the hill, and saw where the giant sat at supper, awing on a limb of a man, and baking his huge frame the fire, while three damsels turned three spits, whereon re spitted, like larks, twelve young children lately born. When King Arthur saw all that, his heart bled for sor-v, and he trembled for rage and indignation; then lift- up his voice he cried aloud—"God, that wieldeth all world, give thee short life and shameful death, and y the devil have thy soul! Why hast thou slain those ldren and that fair lady. Wherefore arise, and pre e thee to perish, thou glutton and fiend, for this day u shalt die by my hands."

Then the giant, mad with fury at these words, started and seizing a great club, smote the king, and struck crown from off his head. But King Arthur smote him h his sword so mightily in return, that all his blood hed forth in streams.

At that the giant, howling in great anguish, threw away club of iron, and caught the king in both his arms strove to crush his ribs together. But King Arthur ggled and writhed, and twisted him about, so that the nt could not hold him tly; and as they fiercely stled, they both fell, rolling over one an-er, tumbled—wrestling, struggling, and fight- frantically—from rock rock, till they came to sea.

And as they tore and strove and tumbled, the king and anon smote at the giant with his dagger, till arms stiffened in death around King Arthur's body, groaning horribly, he died. So presently the two

knights came and found the king locked fast in the giant arms, and very faint and weary, and loosed him fro their hold.

Then the king bade Sir Key to "smite off the giant head, and set it on the truncheon of a spear, and bear to Sir Hoel, and tell him that his enemy is slain; an afterwards let it be fastened to the castle gate, that all th people may behold it. And go ye two up on the moun tain and fetch me my shield and sword, and also the gre club of iron ye will see there; and as for the treasure, shall find there wealth beyond counting, but take as muc as ye will, for if I have his kirtle and the club, I desi no more."

Then the knights fetched the club and kirtle, as th king had ordered, and took the treasure to themselves, much as they could carry, and returned to the army. B when this deed was noised abroad, all the people came multitudes to thank the king, who told them "to giv thanks to God, and to divide the giant's spoils amongst the equally." And King Arthur desired Sir Hoel to build church upon the mount, and dedicate it to the Archang Michael.

On the morrow, all the host moved onwards into t country of Champagne, and Flollo, the Roman tribun retired before them into Paris. But while he was pr paring to collect more forces from the neighbouring cou tries, King Arthur came upon him unawares, and b sieged him in the town.

And when a month had passed, Flollo—full of grief the starvation of his people, who died in hundreds day day—sent to King Arthur, and desired that they two mig fight together; for he was a man of mighty stature a courage, and thought himself sure of the victory. T challenge King Arthur, full weary of the siege, accept

h great joy, and sent back word to Flollo that he would
et him whensoever he appointed.

And a truce being made on both sides, they met to-
her the next day on the island without the city, where
the people also were gathered to see the issue. And
the king and Flollo rode up to the lists, each was so
bly armed and horsed, and sat so mightily upon his
idle, that no man could tell which way the battle would
..

When they had saluted one another, and presented them-
res against each other with their lances aloft, they put
rs to their horses and began a fierce encounter. But
g Arthur, carrying his spear more warily, struck it on
upper part of Flollo's breast, and flung him from his
dle to the earth. Then drawing his sword, he cried
im to rise, and rushed upon him; but Flollo, starting
met him with his spear couched, and pierced the breast
King Arthur's horse, and overthrew both horse and
n.

The Britons, when they saw their king upon the ground,
ld scarcely keep themselves from breaking up the truce
falling on the Gauls. But as they were about to
st the barriers, and rush upon the lists, King Arthur
ily arose, and, guarding himself with his shield,
with speed on Flollo. And now they renewed the as-
t with great rage, being sorely bent upon each other's
th.

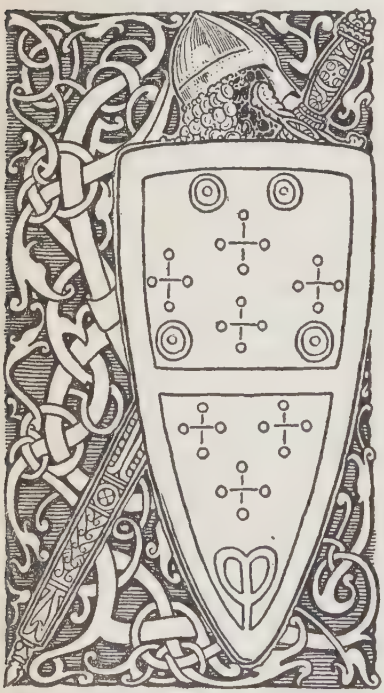
t length, Flollo, seizing his advantage, gave King
hur a huge stroke upon the helm, which nigh overthrew
, and drew forth his blood in streams.

ut when King Arthur saw his armour and shield all
with blood, he was inflamed with fury, and lifting up
calibur on high, with all his might, he struck straight
ough the helmet into Flollo's head, and smote it into

halves; and Flollo falling backwards, and tearing up th ground with his spurs, expired.

As soon as this news spread, the citizens all ran t gether, and, opening the gates, surrendered the city to th conqueror.

And when he had overrun the whole province wit his arms, and reduced it everywhere to subjection, he r



turned again to Britain, an held his court at Caerleon with greater state than ever.

Anon he invited thereto a the kings, dukes, earls, an barons, who owed him hon age, that he might treat the royally, and reconcile them each other, and to his ru

And never was there a ci more fit and pleasant for su festivals. For on one side was washed by a noble riv so that the kings and prin from the countries beyond s might conveniently sail up it; and on the other side, t beauty of the groves a meadows, and the statelin and magnificence of the ro palaces, with lofty gild roofs, made it even rival the grandeur of Rome. It v famous also for two great and noble churches, whereof o was built in honour of the martyr Julius, and adorned w a choir of virgins who had devoted themselves wholly to service of God; and the other, founded in memory of Aaron, his companion, maintained a convent of can

was the third metropolitan church of Britain. Be-
, there was a college of two hundred philosophers,
ied in astronomy, and all the other sciences and arts.
n this place, therefore, full of such delights, King
ur held his court, with many jousts and tournaments,
royal huntings, and rested for a season after all his

.

id on a certain day there came into the court a mes-
er from Ryence, King of North Wales, bearing this
age from his master: That King Ryence had dis-
ited eleven kings, and had compelled each one of them
t off his beard; that he had trimmed a mantle with
beards, and lacked but one more beard to finish it;
that he therefore now sent for King Arthur's beard,
h he required of him forthwith, or else he would enter
nds and burn and slay, and never leave them till he
aken by force not his beard only, but his head also.
hen King Arthur heard these words he flushed all
et, and rising in great anger said, "Well is it for thee
thou speakest another man's words with thy lips, and
thine own. Thou hast said thy message, which is
nost insolent and villainous that ever man heard sent
y king: now hear my reply. My beard is yet too
g to trim that mantle of thy master's with; yet, young
ugh I be, I owe no homage either to him or any man—
will ever owe. But, young although I be, I will have
naster's homage upon both his knees before this year
st, or else he shall lose his head, by the faith of my
, for this message is the shamefullest I ever heard
of. I see well thy king hath never yet met with a
nipful man; but tell him that King Arthur will have
ead or his worship right soon."
en the messenger departed, and Arthur, looking
l upon his knights, demanded of them if any there

knew this King Ryence. "Yea," answered Sir Noran, "
know him well, and there be few better or stronger knigh
upon a field than he; and he
passing proud and haughty in h
heart; wherefore I doubt no
Lord, he will make war on th
with mighty power."

"Well," said King Arthur, "
shall be ready for him, and th
shall he find."

While the king thus spak
there came into the hall a dam
sel having on a mantle rich
furred, which she let fall, an
showed herself to be girded with a noble sword. The ki
being surprised at this, said, "Damsel, wherefore art th
girt with that sword, for it beseemeth thee not?" "Sir
said she, "I will tell thee. This sword wherewith I am th
girt gives me great sorrow and encumbrance, for I may n
be delivered from it till I find a knight faithful and pu
and true, strong of body and of valiant deeds, without gui
or treachery, who shall be able to draw it from its scabbar
which no man else can do. And I have but just now co
from the court of King Ryence, for there they told me ma
great and good knights were to be ever found; but he and
his knights have tried to draw it forth in vain—for none
them can move it."

"This is a great marvel," said King Arthur; "I w
myself try to draw forth this sword, not thinking in
heart that I am the best knight, but rather to begin, a
give example that all may try after me." Saying this,
took the sword and pulled at it with all his might,
could not shake or move it.

"Thou needest not strive so hard, Lord," said the dams

: whoever may be able to pull it forth shall do so
/ easily."

Thou sayest well," replied the king, remembering how had himself drawn forth the sword from the stone ore St. Paul's. "Now try ye, all my barons; but be-e ye be not stained with shame, or any treachery, or e." And turning away his face from them, King hur mused full heavily of sins within his breast he w of, and which his failure brought to mind right y.

hen all the barons present tried each after other, but ld none of them succeed; whereat the damsel greatly t, and said, "Alas, alas! I thought in this court to have id the best knight, without shame or treachery or son."

ow by chance there was at that time a poor knight King Arthur, who had been prisoner at his court for a year and more, charged with slaying unawares a ght who was a cousin of the king's. He was named in le Savage, and had been by the good offices of the ns delivered from prison, for he was of good and val- address and gentle blood. He being secretly present he court saw this adventure, and felt his heart rise high in him, and longed to try the sword as did the others; being poor and poorly clad, he was ashamed to come ward in the press of knights and nobles. But in his rt he felt assured that he could do better—if Heaven ed—than any knight among them all.

o as the damsel left the king, he called to her and said, amsel, I pray thee of thy courtesy, suffer me to try sword as well as all these lords; for though I be but rly clad, I feel assurance in my heart."

he damsel, looking at him, saw in him a likely and nonest man, but because of his poor garments could not

think him to be any knight of worship, and said, "Sir, the is no need to put me to any more pain or labour; w shouldst thou succeed where so many worthy ones ha failed?"

"Ah, fair lady," answered Balin, "worthiness and bra deeds are not shown by fair raiment, but manhood a truth lie hid within the heart. There be many worshi ful knights unknown to all the people."

"By my faith, thou sayest truth," replied the dams "try, therefore, if thou wilt, what thou canst do."

So Balin took the sword by the girdle and hilt, a drew it lightly out, and looking on its workmanship a brightness, it pleased him greatly.

But the king and all the barons marvelled at Sir Bali fortune, and many knights were envious of him, f "Truly," said the damsel, "this is a passing good knig and the best man I have ever found, and the most worshi fully free from treason, treachery, or villainy, and ma wonders shall he achieve.

"Now, gentle and courteous knight," continued s turning to Balin, "give me the sword again."

"Nay," said Sir Balin, "save it be taken from me force, I shall preserve this sword for evermore."

"Thou art not wise," replied the damsel, "to keep from me; for if thou wilt do so, thou shalt slay with the best friend thou hast, and the sword shall be th own destruction also."

"I will take whatever adventure God may send," s Balin; "but the sword will I keep, by the faith of body."

"Thou will repent it shortly," said the damsel; would take the sword for thy sake rather than for mi for I am passing grieved and heavy for thy sake, w

BALIN TOOK THE SWORD AND DREW IT LIGHTLY OUT

not believe the peril I foretell thee." With that she
rted, making great lamentation.
hen Balin sent for his horse and armour, and took
eave of King Arthur, who urged him to stay at his
. "For," said he, "I believe that thou art displeased
I showed thee unkindness; blame me not overmuch,
I was misinformed against thee, and knew not truly
a knight of worship thou art. Abide in this court
my good knights, and I will so advance thee that
shalt be well pleased."
od thank thee, Lord," said Balin, "for no man can re-
thy bounty and thy nobleness; but at this time I must
depart, praying thee ever to hold me in thy favour."
ruly," said King Arthur, "I am grieved for thy de-
re; but tarry not long, and thou shalt be right wel-
to me and all my knights when thou returnest, and
l repair my neglect and all that I have done amiss
st thee."
od thank thee, Lord," again said Balin, and made
to depart.
t meanwhile came into the court a lady upon horse-
full richly dressed, and saluted King Arthur, and
him for the gift that he had promised her when she
him his sword Excalibur, "for," said she, "I am the
of the lake."
sk what thou wilt," said the king, "and thou shalt
it, if I have power to give."
ask," said she, "the head of that knight who hath
achieved the sword, or else the damsel's head who
ht it, or else both; for the knight slew my brother,
e lady caused my father's death."
ruly," said King Arthur, "I cannot grant thee this
; it were against my nature and against my name;
sk whatever else thou wilt, and I will do it."

"I will demand no other thing," said she.

And as she spake came Balin, on his way to leave court, and saw her where she stood, and knew her straig way for his mother's murderess, whom he had sought vain three years. And when they told him that she h asked King Arthur for his head, he went up straight her and said: "May evil have thee! Thou desirest head, therefore shalt thou lose thine"; and with his sw he lightly smote her head off, in the presence of the k and all the court.

"Alas, for shame!" cried out King Arthur, rising up wrath. "Why hast thou done this, shaming both me a my court? I am beholden greatly to this lady, and un my safe conduct came she here; thy deed is passing sha ful; never shall I forgive thy villainy."

"Lord," cried Sir Balin, "hear me; this lady was the f est living, and by her witchcraft hath destroyed many, caused my mother also to be burnt to death by her f arts and treachery."

"What cause soever thou mightest have had," said king, "thou shouldst have forborne her in my prese Deceive not thyself, thou shalt repent this sin, for suc shame was never brought upon my court; depart now fr my face with all the haste thou mayest."

Then Balin took up the head of the lady and carrie to his lodgings, and rode forth with his squire from the town. Then said he, "Now must we part; take ye head and bear it to my friends in Northumberland, and them how I speed, and that our worst foe is dead; tell them that I am free from prison, and of the adven of my sword."

"Alas!" said the squire, "ye are greatly to blame to h so displeased King Arthur."

"As for that," said Sir Balin, "I go now to find K

nce, and destroy him or lose my life; for should I
him prisoner, and lead him to the court, perchance
g Arthur would forgive me, and become my good and
ious lord."

Where shall I meet thee again?" said the squire.

n King Arthur's court," said Balin.

CHAPTER V

SIR BALIN SMITES THE DOLOROUS STROKE, AND FIGHTS WITH HIS BROTHER, SIR BALAN

NOW there was a knight at the court more envi
than the others of Sir Balin, for he counted h
self one of the best knights in Britain. His na
was Lancear; and going to the king, he begged leave to
low after Sir Balin and avenge the insult he had put u
the court. "Do thy best," replied the king, "for I
passing wroth with Balin."

In the meantime came Merlin, and was told of this
venture of the sword and lady of the lake.

"Now hear me," said he, "when I tell ye that
lady who hath brought the sword is the falsest da
living."

"Say not so," they answered, "for she hath a bro
a good knight, who slew another knight this damsel lo
so she, to be revenged upon her brother, went to the I
Lile, of Avilion, and besought her help. Then Lady
gave her the sword, and told her that no man should d
it forth but one, a valiant knight and strong, who sh
avenge her on her brother. This, therefore, was the
son why the damsel came here."

"I know it all as well as ye do," answered Merlin; '

d to God she had never come hither, for never came nto any company but to do harm; and that good knight hath achieved the sword shall be himself slain by it, h shall be great harm and loss, for a better knight liveth not; and he shall do unto my lord the king honour and service."

ien Sir Lancear, having armed himself at all points, nted, and rode after Sir Balin, as fast as he could go, overtaking him, he cried aloud, "Abide, Sir Knight! yet awhile, or I shall make thee do so."

earing him cry, Sir Balin fiercely turned his horse, said, "Fair knight, what wilt thou with me? wilt thou ?"

Yea," said Sir Lancear, "it is for that I have pursued "

eradventure," answered Balin, "thou hadst best have at home, for many a man who thinketh himself al- victor, endeth by his own downfall. Of what court nou?"

of King Arthur's court," cried Lancear, "and I am to revenge the insult thou hast n it this day."

Well," said Sir Balin, "I see that st fight thee, and I repent to be ed to grieve King Arthur or knights; and thy quarrel eth full foolish to me, for the el that is dead worked endless through the land, or else I had loth as any knight that liveth ve slain a lady."

Make thee ready," shouted Lan- "for one of us shall rest for- in this field."

But at their first encounter Sir Lancear's spear fl into splinters from Sir Balin's shield, and Sir Balin's lan pierced with such might through Sir Lancear's shield, th it rove the hauberk also, and passed through the knigh body and the horse's crupper. And Sir Balin turni fiercely round again, drew out his sword, and knew r that he had already slain him; and then he saw him a corpse upon the ground.

At that same moment came a damsel riding towards h as fast as her horse could gallop, who, when she saw Lancear dead, wept and sorrowed out of measure, cryi "O Sir Balin, two bodies hast thou slain, and one hea and two hearts in one body; and two souls also hast th lost."

Therewith she took the sword from her dead lov side—for she was Sir Lancear's lady-love—and setting pommel of it on the ground, ran herself through the bo with the blade.

When Sir Balin saw her dead he was sorely hurt a grieved in spirit, and repented the death of Lancear, wh had also caused so fair a lady's death. And being una to look on their bodies for sorrow, he turned aside i a forest, where presently as he rode he saw the arms his brother, Sir Balan. And when they were met they off their helms, and embraced each other, kissing, a weeping for joy and pity. Then Sir Balin told Sir Ba all his late adventures, and that he was on his way to K Ryence, who at that time was besieging Castle Terra "I will be with thee," answered Sir Balan, "and we v help each other, as brethren ought to do."

Anon by chance, as they were talking, came King M of Cornwall, by that way, and when he saw the two d bodies of Sir Lancear and his lady lying there, and he the story of their death, he vowed to build a tomb to th

re he left that place. So pitching his pavilion there, ought through all the country round to find a monu-, and found at last a rich and fair one in a church, h he took and raised above the dead knight and his dam- vriting on it—"Here lieth Lancear, son of the King of nd, who, at his own request, was slain by Balin; and beside him also lieth his lady Colombe, who slew her- with her lover's sword for grief and sorrow."

nen as Sir Balin and Sir Balan rode away, Merlin with them, and said to Balin, "Thou hast done thy- great harm not to have saved that lady's life who slew lf; and because of it, thou shalt strike the most rous stroke that ever man struck, save he that smote Lord. For thou shalt smite the truest and most wor- ful of living knights, who shall not be recovered from wounds for many years, and through that stroke kingdoms shall be overwhelmed in poverty and ry."

f I believed," said Balin, "what thou sayest, I would myself to make thee a liar."

that Merlin vanished suddenly away; but afterwards aet them in disguise towards night, and told them he l lead them to King Ryence, whom they sought. "For night he is to ride with sixty lances only through a l hard by."

Sir Balin and Sir Balan hid themselves within the , and at midnight came out from their ambush among eaves by the highway, and waited for the king, whom ntly they heard approaching with his company. Then hey suddenly leap forth and smote at him and over- v him and laid him on the ground, and turning on ompany wounded and slew forty of them, and put est to flight. And returning to King Ryence they d have slain him there, but he craved mercy, and

yielded to their grace, crying, "Knights full of prowe slay me not; for by my life ye may win something—l my death can avail ye nought."

"Ye say truth," said the two knights, and put him a horse-litter, and went swiftly through all the night, at cock-crow they came to King Arthur's palace. Th they delivered him to the warders and porters, to be brou before the king, with this message—"That he was sent King Arthur by the knight of the two swords [for so v Balin known by name, since his adventure with the dams and by his brother." And so they rode away again sunrise.

Within a month or two thereafter, King Arthur be somewhat sick, went forth outside the town, and had pavilion pitched in a meadow, and there abode, and l him down on a pallet to sleep, but could get no rest. A as he lay he heard the sound of a great horse, and lo ing out of the tent door, saw a knight ride by, making gr lamentation.

"Abide, fair sir," said King Arthur, "and tell me whe fore thou makest this sorrow."

"Ye may little amend it," said the knight, and so pas on.

Presently after, Sir Balin rode, by chance, past that m dow, and when he saw the king he alighted and came him on foot, and kneeled and saluted him.

"By my head," said King Arthur, "ye be welcome, Balin"; and then he thanked him heartily for reveng him upon King Ryence, and for sending him so spee a prisoner to his castle, and told him how King N Ryence's brother, had attacked him afterwards to del Ryence from prison; and how he had defeated him slain him, and also King Lot of Orkney, who was joi with Nero, and whom King Pellinore had killed in

e. Then when they had thus talked, King Arthur told Balin of the sullen knight that had just passed his tent, desired him to pursue him and to bring him back.

Sir Balin rode and overtook the knight in a forest a damsel, and said, "Sir Knight, thou must come back me unto my lord, King Arthur, to tell him the cause y sorrow, which thou hast refused even now to do."

'hat will I not," replied the knight, "for it would harm uch, and do him no advantage."

ir," said Sir Balin, "I pray thee make ready, for must go with me—or else I must fight with thee and thee by force."

Vilt thou be warrant for safe conduct, if I go with " inquired the knight.

ea, surely," answered Balin, "I will die else."

the knight made ready to go with Sir Balin, and left amsel in the wood.

t as they went, there came one invisible, and smote the ıt through the body with a spear. "Alas," cried Herleus (for so was he named), "I am slain under thy l and conduct, by that traitor knight called Garlon, through magic and witchcraft rideth invisibly. Take, fore, my horse, which is better than thine, and ride to damsel whom we left, and follow the quest I had in , as she will lead thee—and revenge my death when best mayest."

'hat will I do," said Sir Balin, "by my knighthood, o I swear to thee."

en went Sir Balin to the damsel, and rode forth with she carrying ever with her the truncheon of the spear ewith Sir Herleus had been slain. And as they went, od knight, Perin de Mountbelgard, joined their com- and vowed to take adventure with them wheresoever might go. But presently as they passed a hermitage

fast by a churchyard, came the knight Garlon, again invisible, and smote Sir Perin through the body with a spear, and slew him as he had slain Sir Herleus. Whereat, Sir Balin raged, and swore to have Sir Garlon's life, whenever next he might encounter and behold him in his bodily shape. Anon he and the hermit buried the good knight Sir Perin, and rode on with the damsel till they came to a great castle, whereinto they were about to enter. But when Sir Balin had passed through the gateway, the portcullis fell behind him suddenly, leav-

ing the damsel on the outer side, with men around her, drawing their swords as if to slay her.

When he saw that, Sir Balin climbed with eager haste by wall and tower, and leaped into the castle moat, and rushed towards the damsel and her enemies, with his sword drawn, to fight and slay them. But they cried out, "Put up thy sword, Sir Knight, we will not fight thee in this quarrel, for we do nothing but an ancient custom of this castle."

Then they told him that the lady of the castle was passing sick, and had lain ill for many years, and

might never more be cured unless she had a silver dish ful of the blood of a pure maid and a king's daughter. Where fore the custom of the castle was, that never should a damse pass that way but she must give a dish full of her blood Then Sir Balin suffered them to bleed the damsel with he own consent, but her blood helped not the lady of the castl So on the morrow they departed, after right good chee and rest.

Then they rode three or four days without adventur and came at last to the abode of a rich man, who sump tuously lodged and fed them. And while they sat at sup per Sir Balin heard a voice of some one groaning griev ously. "What noise is this?" said he.

"Forsooth," said the host, "I will tell you. I was lately a a tournament, and there I fought a knight who is brothe to King Pelles, and overthrew him twice, for which h swore to be revenged on me through my best friend, and s he wounded my son, who cannot be recovered till I hav that knight's blood, but he rideth through witchcraft a ways invisibly, and I know not his name."

"Ah," said Sir Balin, "but I know him; his name Garlon, and he hath slain two knights, companions of mir own, in the same fashion, and I would rather than a the riches in this realm that I might meet him face face."

"Well," said his host, "let me now tell thee that Kin Pelles hath proclaimed in all the country a great festival, be held at Listeniss, in twenty days from now, whereto a knight may come without a lady. At that great feast v might perchance find out this Garlon, for many will there; and if it please thee we will set forth together."

So on the morrow they rode all three towards Listeni and travelled fifteen days, and reached it on the day t feast began. Then they alighted and stabled their hors

nd went up to the castle, and Sir Balin's host was denied ntrance, having no lady with him. But Sir Balin was ight heartily received, and taken to a chamber, where hey unarmed him, and dressed him in rich robes, of any olour that he chose, and told him he must lay aside his word. This, however, he refused, and said, "It is the ustom of my country for a knight to keep his sword ever ith him; and if I may not keep it here, I will forth- ith depart." Then they gave him leave to wear his word. So he went to the great hall, and was set among nights of rank and worship, and his lady before him.

Soon he found means to ask one who at near him, "Is there not here a night whose name is Garlon?"

"Yonder he goeth," said his neigh- our, "he with that black face; he is he most marvellous knight alive, for e rideth invisibly, and destroyeth whom he will."

"Ah, well," said Balin, drawing a ong breath, "is that indeed the man? have aforetime heard of him."

Then he mused long within himself, and thought, "If I hall slay him here and now, I shall not escape myself; ut if I leave him, peradventure I shall never meet with im again at such advantage; and if he live, how much nore harm and mischief will he do!"

But while he deeply thought, and cast his eyes from time time upon Sir Garlon, that false knight saw that he atched him, and thinking that he could at such a time es- ape revenge, he came and smote Sir Balin on the face with he back of his hand, and said, "Knight, why dost thou so atch me? be ashamed, and eat thy meat, and do that which ou camest for."

"Thou sayest well," cried Sir Balin, rising fiercely; "now will I straightway do that which I came to do, a thou shalt find." With that he whirled his sword aloft and struck him downright on the head, and clove his skul asunder to the shoulder.

"Give me the truncheon," cried out Sir Balin to his lady "wherewith he slew thy knight." And when she gave i him—for she had always carried it about with her, wher ever she had gone—he smote him through the body with it and said, "With that truncheon didst thou treacherousl murder a good knight, and now it sticketh in thy felo body."

Then he called to the father of the wounded son, wh had come with him to Listeniss, and said, "Now take a much blood as thou wilt, to heal thy son withal."

But now arose a terrible confusion, and all the knight leaped from the table to slay Balin, King Pelles himsel the foremost, who cried out, "Knight, thou hast slain m brother at my board; die, therefore, die, for thou sha never leave this castle."

"Slay me, thyself, then," shouted Balin.

"Yea," said the king, "that will I! for no other man sha touch thee, for the love I bear my brother."

Then King Pelles caught in his hand a grim weapo and smote eagerly at Balin, but Balin put his sword be tween his head and the king's stroke, and saved himse but lost his sword, which fell down smashed and shivere into pieces by the blow. So being weaponless he ran to th next room to find a sword, and so from room to roon with King Pelles after him, he in vain ever eagerly cas ing his eyes round every place to find some weapon.

At last he ran into a chamber wondrous richly decke where was a bed all dressed with cloth of gold, the riche that could be thought of, and one who lay quite still with

he bed; and by the bedside stood a table of pure gold, orne on four silver pillars, and on the table stood a marvelous spear, strangely wrought.

When Sir Balin saw the spear he seized it in his hand, nd turned upon King Pelles, and smote at him so fiercely nd so sore that he dropped swooning to the ground.

But at that dolorous and awful stroke the castle rocked nd rove throughout, and all the walls fell crashed and reaking to the earth, and Balin himself fell also in their idst, struck as it were to stone, and powerless to move a and or foot. And so three days he lay amidst the ruins, ntil Merlin came and raised him up and brought him a ood horse, and bade him ride out of that land as swiftly s he could.

"May I not take the damsel with me I brought hither?" id Sir Balin.

"Lo! where she lieth dead," said Merlin. "Ah, little owest thou, Sir Balin, what thou hast done; for in this stle and that chamber which thou didst defile, was the ood of our Lord Christ! and also that most holy cup—e Sangreal—wherefrom the wine was drunk at the last pper of our Lord. Joseph of Arimathea brought it to is land, when first he came here to convert and save it. nd on that bed of gold it was himself who lay, and the range spear beside him was the spear wherewith the solr Longus smote our Lord, which evermore had dripped ith blood. King Pelles is the nearest kin to Joseph in rect descent, wherefore he held these holy things in ust; but now have they all gone at thy dolorous stroke, man knoweth whither; and great is the damage to this nd, which until now hath been the happiest of all lands, r by that stroke thou hast slain thousands, and by the ss and parting of the Sangreal, the safety of this realm is t in peril, and its great happiness is gone for evermore."

Then Balin departed from Merlin, struck to his soul with grief and sorrow, and said, "In this world shall we meet never more."

So he rode forth through the fair cities and the country, and found the people lying dead on every side. And all the living cried out on him as he passed, "O Balin, all this misery hast thou done! For the dolorous stroke thou gavest King Pelles, three countries are destroyed, and doubt not but revenge will fall on thee at last!"

When he had passed the boundary of those countries, he was somewhat comforted, and rode eight days without adventure. Anon he came to a cross, whereon was written in letters of gold, "It is not for a knight alone to ride towards this castle." Looking up, he saw a hoary ancient man come towards him, who said, "Sir Balin le Savage, thou passest thy bounds this way; therefore turn back again, it will be best for thee"; and with these words he vanished.

Then did he hear a horn blow as it were the death-note of some hunted beast. "That blast," said Balin, "is blown for me, for I am the prey; though yet I be not dead." But as he spoke he saw a hundred ladies with a great troop of knights come forth to meet him, with bright faces and great welcome, who led him to the castle and made a great feast, with dancing and minstrelsy and all manner of joy.

Then the chief lady of the castle said, "Knight with the two swords, thou must encounter and fight with a knight hard by, who dwelleth on an island, for no man may pass this way without encountering him."

"It is a grievous custom," answered Sir Balin.

"There is but one knight to defeat," replied the lady.

"Well," said Sir Balin, "be it as thou wilt. I am ready and quite willing, and though my horse and my body be full weary, yet is my heart not weary, save of life. And truly I were glad if I might meet my death."

"Sir," said one standing by, "methinketh your shield is ot good; I will lend you a bigger."

"I thank thee, sir," said Balin, and took the unknown ield and left his own, and so rode forth, and put himself nd horse into a boat and came to the island.

As soon as he had landed, he saw come riding towards im a knight dressed all in red, upon a horse trapped in ie same colour. When the red knight saw Sir Balin, and ie two swords he wore, he thought it must have been is brother (for the red knight was Sir Balan), but when e saw the strange arms on his shield, he forgot the thought, nd came against him fiercely. At the first course they verthrew each other, and both lay swooning on the round; but Sir Balin was the most hurt and bruised, for e was weary and spent with travelling. So Sir Balan ose up first to his feet and drew his sword, and Sir Balin ainfully rose against him and raised his shield. Then Sir alan smote him through the shield and brake his helmet; nd Sir Balin, in return, smote at him with his fated word, and had wellnigh slain his brother. And so they ought till their breaths failed.

Then Sir Balin, looking up, saw all the castle towers and full of ladies. So they went again to battle, and ounded each other full sore, and paused, and breathed gain, and then again began the fight; and this for many mes they did, till all the ground was red with blood. And now, each had full grievously wounded the other with ven great wounds, the least of which might have de-oyed the mightiest giant in the world. But still they se against each other, although their hauberks now were unnailed, and they smiting at each other's naked bodies th their sharp swords. At the last, Sir Balan, the unger brother, withdrew a little space and laid him wn.

Then said Sir Balin le Savage, "What knight art thou? for never before have I found a knight to match me thus."

"My name," said he, all faintly, "is Balan, brother to the good knight Sir Balin."

"Ah, God!" cried Balin, "that ever I should see this day!" and therewith fell down backwards in a swoon.

Then Sir Balan crept with pain upon his feet and hands and put his brother's helmet off his head, but could no know him by his face, it was so hewed and bloody. Bu presently, when Sir Balin came to, he said, "Oh! Balan mine own brother, thou hast slain me, and I thee! Al the wide world saw never greater grief!"

"Alas!" said Sir Balan, "that I ever saw this day; and through mishap alone I knew thee not, for when I saw thy two swords, if it had not been for thy strange shield I should have known thee for my brother."

"Alas!" said Balin, "all this sorrow lieth at the doo of one unhappy knight within the castle, who made m change my shield. If I might live, I would destroy tha castle and its evil customs."

"It were well done," said Balan, "for since I first cam hither I have never been able to depart, for here the made me fight with one who kept this island, whom I slew and by enchantment I might never quit it more; nor could thou, brother, hadst thou slain me, and escaped with thin own life."

Anon came the lady of the castle, and when she hear their talk, and saw their evil case, she wrung her hand and wept bitterly. So Sir Balan prayed the lady of h gentleness that, for his true service, she would bury the both together in that place. This she granted, weeping fu sore, and said it should be done right solemnly and richl and in the noblest manner possible. Then did they ser for a priest, and received the holy sacrament at his hand

OH! BALAN, MINE OWN BROTHER, THOU HAST SLAIN ME, AND I THEE!"

nd Balin said, "Write over us upon our tomb, that here wo brethren slew each other; then shall never good knight r pilgrim pass this way but he will pray for both our ouls." And anon Sir Balan died, but Sir Balin died not ll the midnight after; and then they both were buried.

On the morrow of their death came Merlin, and took ir Balin's sword and fixed on it a new pommel, and set it n a mighty stone, which then, by magic, he made float upon ne water. And so, for many years, it floated to and fro round the island, till it swam down the river to Camelot, where young Sir Galahad achieved it, as shall be told hereafter.

CHAPTER VI

THE MARRIAGE OF KING ARTHUR AND QUEEN GUINEVERE AND THE FOUNDING OF THE ROUND TABLE—THE ADVENTURE OF THE HART AND HOUND

IT befell upon a certain day, that King Arthur said to Merlin, "My lords and knights do daily pray me now to take a wife; but I will have none without thy counsel for thou hast ever helped me since I came first to thi crown."

"It is well," said Merlin, "that thou shouldst take a wife for no man of bounteous and noble nature should live with out one; but is there any lady whom thou lovest better tha another?"

"Yea," said King Arthur, "I love Guinevere, th daughter of King Leodegrance, of Camelgard, who als holdeth in his house the Round Table that he had fron my father Uther; and as I think, that damsel is the gentles and the fairest lady living."

"Sir," answered Merlin, "as for her beauty, she is on of the fairest that do live; but if ye had not loved her a ye do, I would fain have had ye choose some other wh was both fair and good. But where a man's heart is se he will be loth to leave." This Merlin said, knowin the misery that should hereafter happen from this ma riage.

Then King Arthur sent word to King Leodegrance tha he mightily desired to wed his daughter, and how that h had loved her since he saw her first, when with Kings Ba and Bors he rescued Leodegrance from King Ryence North Wales.

When King Leodegrance heard the message, he crie

ENTS WERE SET BESIDE SOME STREAM,
KNIGHTS WOULD TELL ADVENTURES

ut, "These be the best tidings I have heard in all my life —so great and worshipful a prince to seek my daughter or his wife! I would fain give him half my lands with er straightway, but that he needeth none—and better will please him that I send him the Round Table of King Uther, his father, with a hundred good knights towards he furnishing of it with guests, for he will soon find means o gather more, and make the table full."

Then King Leodegrance delivered his daughter Guine-ere to the messengers of King Arthur, and also the Round Table with the hundred knights.

So they rode royally and freshly, sometimes by water nd sometimes by land, towards Camelot. And as they ode along in the spring weather, they made full many orts and pastimes. And, in all those sports and games, young knight lately come to Arthur's court, Sir Lancelot y name, was passing strong, and won praise from all, be-g full of grace and hardihood; and Guinevere also ever ooked on him with joy. And always in the eventide, when e tents were set beside some stream or forest, many min-els came and sang before the knights and ladies as they t in the tent-doors, and many knights would tell adven-res; and still Sir Lancelot was foremost, and told the ightliest tales, and sang the goodliest songs, of all the mpany.

And when they came to Camelot, King Arthur made eat joy, and all the city with him; and riding forth with great retinue he met Guinevere and her company, and d her through the streets all filled with people, and in e midst of all their shoutings and the ringing of church lls, to a palace hard by his own.

Then, in all haste, the king commanded to prepare the arriage and the coronation with the stateliest and most nourable pomp that could be made. And when the day

was come, the archbishops led the king to the cathedra whereto he walked, clad in his royal robes, and havin four kings, bearing four golden swords, before him; a choi of passing sweet music going also with him.

In another part, was the queen dressed in her riche ornaments, and led by archbishops and bishops to th Chapel of the Virgins, the four queens also of the four king last mentioned walked before her, bearing four whi doves, according to ancient custom; and after her the followed many damsels, singing and making every sign joy.

And when the two processions were come to the churche so wondrous was the music and the singing, that all th knights and barons who were there pressed on each othe as in the crowd of battle, to hear and see the most th might.

When the king was crowned, he called together all t knights that came with the Round Table from Camelgar and twenty-eight others, great and valiant men, chosen Merlin out of all the realm, towards making up the fu number of the table. Then the Archbishop of Canterbu blessed the seats of all the knights, and when they ro again therefrom to pay their homage to King Arthu there was found upon the back of each knight's seat name, written in letters of gold. But upon one seat w found written, "This is the Siege Perilous, wherein if a man shall sit save him whom Heaven hath chosen, shall be devoured by fire."

Anon came young Gawain, the king's nephew, pra ing to be made a knight, whom the king knighted then a there. Soon after came a poor man, leading with him tall fair lad of eighteen years of age, riding on a lean ma And falling at the king's feet, the poor man said, "Lo it was told me, that at this time of thy marriage th

OW KING ARTHUR GREETED QUEEN GUINEVERE

vouldst give to any man the gift he asked for, so it were ot unreasonable."

"That is the truth," replied King Arthur, "and I will ake it good."

"Thou sayest graciously and nobly," said the poor man. Lord, I ask nothing else but that thou wilt make my son ere a knight."

"It is a great thing that thou askest," said the king. What is thy name?"

"Aries, the cowherd," answered he.

"Cometh this prayer from thee or from thy son?" quired King Arthur.

"Nay, lord, not from myself," said he, "but from him ly, for I have thirteen other sons, and all of them will ll to any labour that I put them to. But this one will no such work for anything that I or my wife ay do, but is forever shooting or fighting, and running see knights and joustings, and torments me both night id day that he be made a knight."

"What is thy name?" said the king to the young man.

"My name is Tor," said he.

Then the king, looking at him steadfastly, was well eased with his face and figure, and with his look of noble- ess and strength.

"Fetch all thy other sons before me," said the king Aries. But when he brought them, none of them re- mbled Tor in size or shape or feature.

Then the king knighted Tor, saying, "Be thou to thy e's end a good knight and a true, as I pray God thou ayest be; and if thou provest worthy, and of prowess, e day thou shalt be counted in the Round Table." Then rning to Merlin, Arthur said, "Prophesy now, O Merlin, all Sir Tor become a worthy knight, or not?"

"Yea, lord," said Merlin, "so he ought to be, for he

is the son of that King Pellinore whom thou hast met, and proved to be one of the best knights living. He is no cowherd's son."

Presently after came in King Pellinore, and when he saw Sir Tor he knew him for his son, and was more pleased than words can tell to find him knighted by the king. And Pellinore did homage to King Arthur, and was gladly and graciously accepted of the king; and then was led by Merlin to a high seat at the Table Round, near to the Perilous Seat.

But Sir Gawain was full of anger at the honour done King Pellinore, and said to his brother Gaheris, "He slew our father, King Lot, therefore will I slay him."

"Do it not yet," said he; "wait till I also be a knight, then will I help ye in it: it is best ye suffer him to go at this time, and not trouble this high feast with bloodshed."

"As ye will, be it," said Sir Gawain.

Then rose the king and spake to all the Table Round, and charged them to be ever true and noble knights, to do neither outrage nor murder, nor any unjust violence, and always to flee treason; also by no means ever to be cruel, but give mercy unto him that asked for mercy, upon pain of forfeiting the liberty of his court for evermore. Moreover, at all times, on pain of death, to give aid succour unto ladies and young damsels; and lastly never to take part in any wrongful quarrel, for reward or payment. And to all this he swore them knight by knight.

Then he ordained that, every year at Pentecost, they should all come before him, wheresoever he might appoint a place, and give account of all their doings and adventures of the past twelvemonth. And so, with prayer and blessing, and high words of cheer, he instituted the most noble order of the Round Table, whereto the best and

ravest knights in all the world sought afterwards to find dmission.

Then was the high feast made ready, and the king and ueen sat side by side, before the whole assembly; and reat and royal was the banquet and the pomp.

And as they sat, each man in his place, Merlin went und and said, "Sit still awhile, for ye shall see a strange d marvellous adventure."

So as they sat, there suddenly came running through the ll a white hart, with a white hound next after him, d thirty couple of black running hounds, making full y; and the hart made circuit of the Table Round, and st the other tables; and suddenly the white hound flew on him and bit him fiercely, and tore out a piece from s haunch. Whereat the hart sprang suddenly with a eat leap, and overthrew a knight sitting at the table, who se forthwith, and, taking up the hound, mounted, and le fast away.

But no sooner had he left, than there came in a lady, ounted on a white palfrey, who cried out to the king, ord, suffer me not to have this injury!—the hound is ne which that knight taketh." And as she spake, a ight rode in all armed, on a great horse, and suddenly k up the lady and rode away with her by force, although greatly cried and moaned.

Then the king desired Sir Gawain, Sir Tor, and King llinore to mount and follow this adventure to the utter-st; and told Sir Gawain to bring back the hart, Sir r the hound and knight, and King Pellinore the knight l the lady.

So Sir Gawain rode forth at a swift pace, and with him heris, his brother, for a squire. And as they went, they v two knights fighting on horseback, and when they ched them they divided them and asked the reason of

their quarrel. "We fight for a foolish matter," one re plied, "for we be brethren; but there came by a white har this way, chased by many hounds, and thinking it was a adventure for the high feast of King Arthur, I woul have followed it to have gained worship; whereat my younger brother here declared he was the better knigh and would go after it instead, and so we fight to prov which of us be the better knight."

"This is a foolish thing," said Sir Gawain. "Figh with all strangers, if ye will, but not brother with brothe Take my advice, set on against me, and if ye yield to me as I shall do my best to make ye, ye shall go to King Arthu and yield ye to his grace."

"Sir Knight," replied the brothers, "we are weary, an will do thy wish without encountering thee; but by whom shall we tell the king that we were sent?"

"By the knight that followeth the quest of the whit hart," said Sir Gawain. "And now tell me your name and let us part."

"Sorlous and Brian of the Forest," they replied; an so they went their way to the king's court.

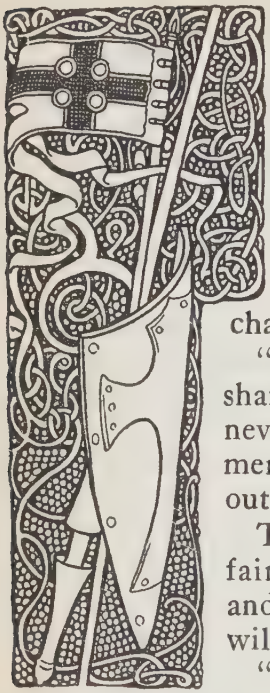
Then Sir Gawain, still following his quest by the di tant baying of the hounds, came to a great river, and sa the hart swimming over and near to the further ban And as he was about to plunge in and swim after, he sa a knight upon the other side, who cried, "Come not ov here, Sir Knight, after that hart, save thou wilt joust wi me."

"I will not fail for that," said Sir Gawain; and swa his horse across the stream.

Anon they got their spears, and ran against each oth fiercely; and Sir Gawain smote the stranger off his hor and turning, bade him yield.

"Nay," replied he, "not so; for though ye have the bett

me on horseback, I pray thee, valiant knight, alight,
l let us match together with our swords on foot."
'What is thy name?" quoth Gawain.
'Allardin of the Isles," replied the stranger.
Then they fell on each other; but soon Sir Gawain
uck him through the helm, so deeply and so hard, that
his brains were scattered, and Sir Allardin fell dead.
h," said Gaheris, "that was a mighty stroke for a young
ght!"
Then did they turn again to follow the white hart, and
slip three couple of greyhounds after him; and at the
they chased him to a castle, and there they overtook
slew him, in the courtyard.
At that there rushed a knight forth from a chamber, with
rawn sword in his hand, and slew two of the hounds be-
e their eyes, and chased the others from the castle, cry-
"Oh, my white hart! alas, that thou art dead! for thee
sovereign lady gave to me, and evil have I kept thee;
if I live, thy death shall be dear bought." Anon he went
in and armed, and came out fiercely, and met Sir Ga-
n face to face.
'Why have ye slain my hounds?" said Sir Gawain;
:y did but after their nature: and ye had better
e taken vengeance on me than on the poor dumb
its."
I will avenge me on thee, also," said the other, "ere
u depart this place."
Then did they fight with each other savagely and madly,
the blood ran down to their feet. But at last Sir Ga-
n had the better, and felled the knight of the castle to
ground. Then he cried out for mercy, and yielded to
Gawain, and besought him as he was a knight and
lemen to save his life. "Thou shalt die," said Sir
vain, "for slaying my hounds."



"I will make thee amends with my power," replied the knight.

But Sir Gawain would have mercy, and unlaced his helm to strike his head off; and so blind was he with rage, that he saw not where a lady ran out from her chamber and fell down upon his enemy. And making a fierce blow at him, he smote off by mischance the lady's head.

"Alas!" cried Gaheris, "foully and shamefully have ye done—the shame shall never leave ye! Why give ye not your mercy unto them that ask it? a knight without mercy is without worship also."

Then Sir Gawain was sore amazed at the fair lady's death, and knew not what to do, and said to the fallen knight, "Arise, for I will give thee mercy."

"Nay, nay," said he, "I care not for thy mercy now, for thou hast slain my lady and my love—that of all earthly things I loved the best."

"I repent me sorely of it," said Sir Gawain, "for I meant to have struck thee: but now shalt thou go to King Arthur and tell him this adventure, and how thou hast been overcome by the knight that followeth the quest of the white hart."

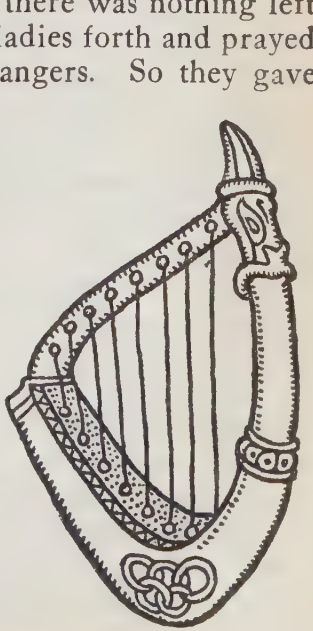
"I care not whether I live or die, or where I go," replied the knight.

So Sir Gawain sent him to the court of Camelot, making him bear one dead greyhound before and one behind him on his horse. "Tell me thy name before we part," said he.

"My name is Athmore of the Marsh," he answered.

ND HIS KNIGHTS

Then went Sir Gawain into the castle, and prepared to
ep there and began to unarm; but Gaheris upbraided
n, saying, "Will ye disarm in this strange country? be-
nk ye, ye must needs have many enemies about."
No sooner had he spoken, than there came out suddenly
ır knights, well armed, and assailed them hard, saying
Sir Gawain, "Thou new-made knight, how hast thou
amed thy knighthood! a knight without mercy is dis-
noured! Slayer of fair ladies, shame to thee evermore!
oubt not thou shalt thyself have need of mercy ere we
ve thee."
Then were the brothers in great jeopardy, and feared
their lives, for they were but two to four, and weary
h travelling; and one of the four knights shot Sir Ga-
in with a bolt, and hit him through the arm, so that
could fight no more. But when there was nothing left
them but death, there came four ladies forth and prayed
four knights' mercy for the strangers. So they gave
Gawain and Gaheris their lives,
d made them yield themselves
soners.



On the morrow, came one of the
ies to Sir Gawain, and talked
h him, saying, "Sir Knight, what
eer?"
"Not good," said he.
"It is your own default, sir,"
d the lady, "for ye have done a
sing foul deed in slaying that
r damsel yesterday—and ever
ll it be great shame to you. But
be not of King Arthur's kin."
"Yea, truly am I," said he; "my
ne is Gawain, son of King Lot

of Orkney, whom King Pellinore slew—and my moth
Belisent, is half-sister to the king."

When the lady heard that, she went and presently g
leave for him to quit the castle; and they gave him t
head of the white hart to take with him, because it w
in his quest; but made him also carry the dead lady wi
him—her head hung round his neck and her body lay b
fore him on his horse's neck.

So in that fashion he rode back to Camelot; and wh
the king and queen saw him, and heard tell of his adve
tures, they were heavily displeased, and, by the order
the queen, he was put upon his trial before a court of lad
—who judged him to be evermore, for all his life, t
knight of ladies' quarrels, and to fight always on their si
and never against any, except he fought for one lady a
his adversary for another; also they charged him never
refuse mercy to him that asked it, and swore him to it
the Holy Gospels. Thus ended the adventure of the wh
hart.

Meanwhile, Sir Tor had made him ready, and follow
the knight who rode away with the hound. And as
went, there suddenly met him in the road a dwarf, w
struck his horse so viciously upon the head with a gr
staff, that he leaped backwards a spear's length.

"Wherefore so smitest thou my horse, foul dwar
shouted Sir Tor.

"Because thou shalt not pass this way," replied the dw
"unless thou fight for it with yonder knights in those
vilions," pointing to two tents, where two great spears st
out, and two shields hung upon two trees hard by.

"I may not tarry, for I am on a quest I needs must
low," said Sir Tor.

"Thou shalt not pass," replied the dwarf, and therev
blew his horn. Then rode out quickly at Sir Tor

ned on horseback, but Sir Tor was quick as he, and ing at him bore him from his horse, and made him ld. Directly after came another still more fiercely, but h a few great strokes and buffets Sir Tor unhorsed him , and sent them both to Camelot to King Arthur. en came the dwarf and begged Sir Tor to take him in service, "for," said he, "I will serve no more recreant ghts."

'Take then a horse, and come with me," said Tor.

'Ride ye after the knight with the white hound?" said dwarf; "I can soon bring ye where he is."

So they rode through forest till they came to more tents. And Sir r alighting, went into first, and saw three nsels lie there, sleep- . Then went he to the er, and found another y also sleeping, and at feet the white hound sought for, which in- ntly began to bay and k so loudly, that the lady woke. But Sir Tor had seized hound and given it to the dwarf's charge.

'What will ye do, Sir Knight?" cried out the lady; "will ake away my hound from me by force?"

'Yea, lady," said Sir Tor; "for so I must, having the g's command; and I have followed it from King Ar- r's court, at Camelot, to this place."

'Well," said the lady, "ye will not go far before ye be handled, and will repent ye of the quest."

I shall cheerfully abide whatsoever adventure cometh, the grace of God," said Sir Tor; and so mounted his

horse and began to ride back on his way. But night co
ing on, he turned aside to a hermitage that was in t
forest, and there abode till the next day, making but s
rowful cheer of such poor food as the hermit had to gi
him, and hearing a mass devoutly before he left on t
morrow.

And in the early morning, as he rode forth with t
dwarf towards Camelot, he heard a knight call loud
after him, "Turn, turn! Abide, Sir Knight, and yield
up the hound thou tookest from my lady." At which
turned, and saw a great and strong knight, armed f
splendidly, riding down upon him fiercely through a gla
of the forest.

Now Sir Tor was very ill provided, for he had but
old courser, which was as weak as himself, because of
hermit's scanty fare. He waited, nevertheless, for t
strange knight to come, and at the first onset with th
spears, each unhorsed the other, and then fell to with th
swords like two mad lions. Then did they smite throu
one another's shields and helmets till the fragments flew
all sides, and their blood ran out in streams; but yet th
carved and rove through the thick armour of the hauber
and gave each other great and ghastly wounds. But in
end, Sir Tor, finding the strange knight faint, doubled
strokes until he beat him to the earth. Then did he
him yield to his mercy.

"That will I not," replied Abellius, "while my life l
eth and my soul is in my body, unless thou give me f
the hound."

"I cannot," said Sir Tor, "and will not, for it was
quest to bring again that hound and thee unto King Arth
or otherwise to slay thee."

With that there came a damsel riding on a palfrey
fast as she could drive, and cried out to Sir Tor wit

d voice, "I pray thee, for King Arthur's love, give me
ift."
Ask," said Sir Tor, "and I will give thee."
Grammercy," said the lady, "I ask the head of this
e knight Abellius, the most outrageous murderer that
th."
I repent me of the gift I promised," said Sir Tor.
t him make thee amends for all his trespasses against
."
He cannot make amends," replied the damsel, "for he
h slain my brother, a far better knight than he, and
rned to give him mercy, though I kneeled for half an
r before him in the mire, to beg it, and though it was
by a chance they fought, and for no former injury or
rrel. I require my gift of thee as a true knight, or
will I shame thee in King Arthur's court; for this
llius is the falsest knight alive, and a murderer of
y."
When Abellius heard this, he trembled greatly, and
sore afraid, and yielded to Sir Tor, and prayed his
cy.
I cannot now, Sir Knight," said he, "lest I be false to
promise. Ye would not take my mercy when I offered
nd now it is too late."
Therewith he unlaced his helmet, and took it off; but
llius, in dismal fear, struggled to his feet, and fled, un-
Sir Tor overtook him, and smote off his head entirely
one blow.
Now, sir," said the damsel, "it is near night, I pray
come and lodge at my castle hard by."
I will, with a good will," said he, for both his horse
he had fared but poorly since they left Camelot.
o he went to the lady's castle and fared sumptuously,
saw her husband, an old knight, who greatly thanked

him for his service, and urged him oftentimes to come again.

On the morrow he departed, and reached Camelot by noon, where the king and queen rejoiced to see him, and the king made him earl; and Merlin prophesied that these adventures were but little to the things he should achieve hereafter.

Now while Sir Gawain and Sir Tor had

fulfilled their quests, King Pellinore pursued the lady whom the knight had seized away from the wedding-feast. And as he rode through the woods, he saw in a valley a fair young damsel sitting by a well-side, and a wounded knight lying in her arms, and King Pellinore saluted her as he passed by.

As soon as she perceived him she cried out, "Help, he me, Knight, for our Lord's sake!" But Pellinore was too eager in his quest to stay or turn, although she cri a hundred times to him for help; at which she prayed Heaven he might have such sore need before he died she had now. And presently thereafter her knight di in her arms; and she, for grief and love, slew herself wi his sword.

But King Pellinore rode on till he met a poor man, a asked him had he seen a knight pass by that way, leadi by force a lady with him.

"Yea, surely," said the man, "and greatly did she mo and cry; but even now another knight is fighting with h to deliver the lady; ride on and thou shalt find them fig ing still."

At that King Pellinore rode swiftly on, and came where he saw the two knights fighting, hard by whe two pavilions stood. And when he looked in one of the he saw the lady that was his quest, and with her the t squires of the two knights who fought.

"Fair lady," said he, "ye must come with me unto Ki Arthur's court."

"Sir Knight," said the two squires, "yonder be t knights fighting for this lady; go part them, and get th consent to take her, ere thou touch her."

"Ye say well," said King Pellinore, and rode betwe the combatants, and asked them why they fought.

"Sir Knight," said the one, "yon lady is my cousin, m aunt's daughter, whom I met borne away against her w by this knight here, with whom I therefore fight to f her."

"Sir Knight," replied the other, whose name was Har lake of Wentland, "this lady got I, by my arms and pro ess, at King Arthur's court to-day."

"That is false," said King Pellinore; "ye stole the lady ddenly, and fled away with her, before any knight could m to stay thee. But it is my service to take her back again. either of ye shall therefore have her; but if ye will fight r her, fight with me now and here."

"Well," said the knights, "make ready, and we will as- il thee with all our might."

Then Sir Hantzlake ran King Pellinore's horse through ith his sword, so that they might be all alike on foot. ut King Pellinore at that was passing wroth, and ran upon r Hantzlake, with a cry, "Keep well thy head!" and ve him such a stroke upon the helm as clove him to the in, so that he fell dead to the ground. When he saw at, the other knight refused to fight, and kneeling down id, "Take my cousin the lady with thee, as thy quest is; t as thou art a true knight, suffer her to come to neither ame nor harm."

So the next day King Pellinore departed for Camelot, d took the lady with him; and as they rode in a valley ll of rough stones, the damsel's horse stumbled and threw r, so that her arms were sorely bruised and hurt. And they rested in the forest for the pain to lessen, night came , and there they were compelled to make their lodging. little before midnight they heard the trotting of a horse. e ye still," said King Pellinore, "for now we may hear some adventure," and therewith he armed him. Then heard two knights meet and salute each other, in the rk; one riding from Camelot, the other from the north. "What tidings at Camelot?" said one.

"By my head," said the other, "I have but just left there, d have espied King Arthur's court, and such a fellow- p is there as never may be broke or overcome; for well- h all the chivalry of the world is there, and all full al to the king, and now I ride back homewards to the

north to tell our chiefs, that they waste not their stren in wars against him."

"As for all that," replied the other knight, "I am now from the north, and bear with me a remedy, the de liest poison that ever was heard tell of, and to Cam will I with it; for there we have a friend close to the ki and greatly cherished of him, who hath received gifts fr us to poison him, as he hath promised soon to do."

"Beware," said the first knight, "of Merlin, for he kn eth all things, by the devil's craft."

"I will not fear for that," replied the other, and so r on his way.

Anon King Pellinore and the lady passed on again; when they came to the well at which the lady with wounded knight had sat, they found both knight and da sel utterly devoured by lions and wild beasts, all save lady's head.

When King Pellinore saw that, he wept bitterly, sayi "Alas! I might have saved her life had I but tarried a moments in my quest."

"Wherefore make so much sorrow now?" said the la

"I know not," answered he, "but my heart griev greatly for this poor lady's death, so fair she was young."

Then he required a hermit to bury the remains of bodies, and bare the lady's head with him to Camelot the court.

When he was arrived, he was sworn to tell the t of his quest before the king and queen, and when he entered the queen somewhat upbraided him, saying, were much to blame that ye saved not that lady's life."

"Madam," said he, "I shall repent it all my life."

"Ay, king," quoth Merlin, who suddenly came in, " so ye ought to do, for that lady was your daughter, not

QUEEN GUINEVERE GOES A-MAYING

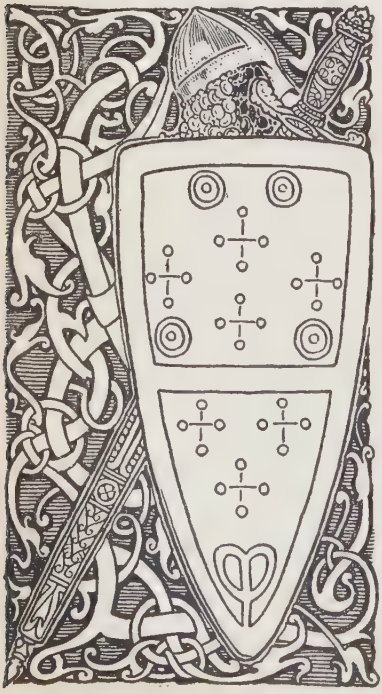
nce infancy by thee. And she was on her way to court, ith a right good young knight, who would have been her usband, but was slain by treachery of a felon knight, Lor- ine le Savage, as they came; and because thou wouldst ot abide and help her, thy best friend shall fail thee in ine hour of greatest need, for such is the penance or- ained thee for that deed."

Then did King Pellinore tell Merlin secretly of the eason he had heard in the forest, and Merlin by his aft so ordered that the knight who bare the poison was imself soon after slain by it, and so King Arthur's life as saved.

CHAPTER VII

KING ARTHUR AND SIR ACCOLON OF GAUL

BEING now happily married, King Arthur for
season took his pleasure, with great tournaments, a
jousts, and huntings. So once upon a time the ki
and many of his knights rode hunting in a forest, a
Arthur, King Urience, and Sir Accolon of Gaul follow
after a great hart, and being all three well mounted, th
chased so fast that they outsped their company, and l
them many miles behind; but riding still as rapidly as th



could go, at length the
horses fell dead under ther
Then being all three on fo
and seeing the stag not far l
fore them, very weary a
nigh spent—"What shall
do," said King Arthur, "
we are all hard bested
"Let us go on afoot," sa
King Urience, "till we c
find some lodging." At th
they saw the stag lying up
the bank of a great lake, w
a hound springing at
throat, and many oth
hounds trooping towards hi
So, running forward, Arth
blew the death-note on
horn, and slew the ha
Then lifting up his eyes
saw before him on the lak

arge, all draped down to the water's edge, with silken folds nd curtains, which swiftly came towards him, and touched pon the sands; but when he went up close and looked in, he aw no earthly creature. Then he cried out to his com-anions, "Sirs, come ye hither, and let us see what there is n this ship." So they all three went in, and found it every-vhere throughout furnished and hung with rich draperies f silk and gold.

By this time eventide had come, when suddenly a hun-red torches were set up on all sides of the barge, and gave dazzling light, and at the same time came forth twelve air damsels, and saluted King Arthur by his name, kneel-ng on their knees, and telling him that he was welcome, nd should have their noblest cheer, for which the king anked them courteously. Then did they lead him and is fellows to a splendid chamber, where was a table spread ith all the richest furniture, and costliest wines and ands; and there they served them with all kinds of wines nd meats, till Arthur wondered at the splendour of the ast, declaring he had never in his life supped better, or ore royally. After supper they led him to another amber, than which he had never beheld a richer, where e was left to rest. King Urience, also, and Sir Accolon ere each conducted into rooms of like magnificence. nd so they all three fell asleep, and being very weary ept deeply all that night.

But when the morning broke, King Urience found him-lf in his own house in Camelot, he knew not how; and rthur awaking found himself in a dark dungeon, and ard around him nothing but the groans of woful knights, isoners like himself. Then said King Arthur, "Who are thus groaning and complaining?" And some one an-ered him, "Alas, we be all prisoners, even twenty good ights, and some of us have lain here seven years—some

more—nor seen the light of day for all that time." "F
what cause?" said King Arthur. "Know ye not then you
self?" they answered—"we will soon tell you. The lo
of this strong castle is Sir Damas, and is the falsest a
most traitorous knight that liveth; and he hath a young
brother, a good and noble knight, whose name is Outzlak
This traitor Damas, although passing rich, will give h
brother nothing of his wealth, and save what Outzla
keepeth to himself by force, he hath no share of the i
heritance. He owneth, nevertheless, one fair rich manc
whereupon he liveth, loved of all men far and near. B
Damas is as altogether hated as his brother is beloved, f
he is merciless and cowardly: and now for many yea
there hath been war between these brothers, and Sir Out
lake evermore defieth Damas to come forth and fight wi
him, body to body, for the inheritance; and if he be t
cowardly, to find some champion knight that will fig
for him. And Damas hath agreed to find some champi
but never yet hath found a knight to take his evil cause
hand, or wager battle for him. So with a strong band
men-at-arms he lieth ever in ambush, and taketh capti
every passing knight who may unwarily go near, a
bringeth him into this castle, and desireth him either
fight Sir Outzlake, or to lie for evermore in duran
And thus hath he dealt with all of us, for we all scorned
take up such a cause for such a false foul knight—h
rather one by one came here, where many a good knig
hath died of hunger and disease. But if one of us wou
fight, Sir Damas would deliver all the rest."

"God of his mercy send you deliverance," said Ki
Arthur, and sat turning in his mind how all these thi
should end, and how he might himself gain freedom
so many noble hearts.

Anon there came a damsel to the king, saying, "

f thou wilt fight for my lord thou shalt be delivered out f prison, but else nevermore shalt thou escape with thy fe." "Nay," said King Arthur, "that is but a hard choice, et had I rather fight than die in prison, and if I may de- ver not myself alone, but all these others, I will do the attle." "Yea," said the damsel, "it shall be even so." Then," said King Arthur, "I am ready now, if but I had horse and armour." "Fear not," said she, "that shalt ou have presently, and shalt lack nothing proper for the ght." "Have I not seen thee," said the king, "at King rthur's court? for it seemeth that thy face is known to e." "Nay," said the damsel, "I was never there; I am ir Damas' daughter, and have never been but a day's ourney from this castle." But she spoke falsely, for she as one of the damsels of Morgan le Fay, the great en- antress, who was King Arthur's half-sister.

When Sir Damas knew that there had been at length a night found who would fight for him, he sent for Arthur, nd finding him a man so tall and strong, and straight of mb, he was passingly well pleased, and made a covenant ith him, that he should fight unto the uttermost for his use, and that all the other nights should be delivered. nd when they were sworn each other on the Holy ospels all these impris- ned knights were straight- ay led forth and deliv- ed, but abode there one d all to see the battle.

In the meanwhile there ad happened to Sir Ac- lon of Gaul a strange ad- nture; for when he awoke

from his deep sleep upon the silken barge, he found himse upon the edge of a deep well, and in instant peril of falli thereinto. Whereat, leaping up in great affright, crossed himself and cried aloud, "May God preserve r lord King Arthur and King Urience, for those damsels the ship have betrayed us, and were doubtless devils a no women; and if I may escape this misadventure, I w certainly destroy them wheresoever I may find them With that there came to him a dwarf with a great mou and a flat nose, and saluted him, saying that he came fr Queen Morgan le Fay. "And she greeteth you well," sa he, "and biddeth you be strong of heart, for to-morrow y shall do battle with a strange knight, and therefore she ha sent you here Excalibur, King Arthur's sword, and t scabbard likewise. And she desireth you as you do lo her to fight this battle to the uttermost, and without a mercy, as you have promised her you would fight when s should require it of you; and she will make a rich que forever of any damsel that shall bring her that knigh head with whom you are to fight."

"Well," said Sir Accolon, "tell you my lady Queen M gan, that I shall hold to that I promised her, now tha have this sword—and," said he, "I suppose it was to bri about this battle that she made all these enchantments by h craft." "You have guessed rightly," said the dwarf, a therewithal he left him.

Then came a knight and lady, and six squires, to Accolon, and took him to a manor house hard by, a gave him noble cheer; and the house belonged to Sir Ou lake, the brother of Sir Damas, for so had Morgan le F contrived with her enchantments. Now Sir Outzlake h self was at that time sorely wounded and disabled, hav been pierced through both his thighs by a spear-thr When, therefore, Sir Damas sent down messengers to

IORGAN LE FAY SENDS A FALSE SWORD AND SCABBARD TO KING ARTHUR

other, bidding him make ready by to-morrow morning, d be in the field to fight with a good knight, for that he d found a champion ready to do battle at all points, Sir utzlake was sorely annoyed and distressed, for he knew had small chance of victory while yet he was disabled his wounds; notwithstanding, he determined to take e battle in hand, although he was so weak that he must eds be lifted to his saddle. But when Sir Accolon of Gaul ard this, he sent a message to Sir Outzlake offering to ke the battle in his stead, which cheered Sir Outzlake ightily, who thanked Sir Accolon with all his heart, and yfully accepted him.

So, on the morrow, King Arthur was armed and well rsed, and asked Sir Damas, "When shall we go to the ld?" "Sir," said Sir Damas, "you shall first hear mass." nd when mass was done, there came a squire on a great rse, and asked Sir Damas if his knight were ready, "for r knight is already on the field." Then King Arthur ounted on horseback, and there around were all the ights, and barons, and people of the country; and twelve them were chosen to wait upon the two knights who were out to fight. And as King Arthur sat on horseback, ere came a damsel from Morgan le Fay, and brought to m a sword, made like Excalibur, and a scabbard also, d said to him, "Morgan le Fay sendeth you here your ord for her great love's sake." And the king thanked r, and believed it to be as she said; but she traitorously ceived him, for both sword and scabbard were counter- t, brittle, and false, and the true sword Excalibur was the hands of Sir Accolon. Then, at the sound of a mpet, the champions set themselves on opposite sides of field, and giving rein and spur to their horses urged m to so great a speed that each smiting the other in the ddle of the shield, rolled his opponent to the ground,

both horse and man. Then starting up immediately, b drew their swords and rushed swiftly together. And they fell to eagerly, and gave each other many great a mighty strokes.

And as they were thus fighting, the damsel Vivien, la of the lake, who loved King Arthur, came upon ground, for she knew by her enchantments how Morgan Fay had craftily devised to have King Arthur slain by own sword that day, and therefore came to save his l And Arthur and Sir Accolon were now grown hot agai each other, and spared not strength nor fury in their fie assaults; but the king's sword gave way continually bef Sir Accolon's, so that at every stroke he was sore wound and his blood ran from him so fast that it was a marvel could stand. When King Arthur saw the ground so s beblooded, he bethought him in dismay that there magic treason worked upon him, and that his own t sword was changed, for it seemed to him that the sword Sir Accolon's hand was Excalibur, for fearfully it drew blood at every blow, while what he held himself kept sharp edge, nor fell with any force upon his foe.

"Now, Knight, look to thyself, and keep thee well fr me," cried out Sir Accolon. But King Arthur answe not, and gave him such a buffet on the helm as made h stagger and nigh fall upon the ground. Then Sir colon withdrew a little, and came on with Excalibur high, and smote King Arthur in return with such a mig stroke as almost felled him; and both being now in ho wrath, they gave each other grievous and savage blo But Arthur all the time was losing so much blood scarcely could he keep upon his feet, yet so full was h knighthood, that knightly he endured the pain, and sustained himself, though now he was so feeble tha thought himself about to die. Sir Accolon, as yet,

st no drop of blood, and being very bold and confident
Excalibur, even grew more vigorous and hasty in his
ssaults. But all men who beheld them said they never
w a knight fight half so well as did King Arthur; and
l the people were so grieved for him that they besought
ir Damas and Sir Outzlake to make up their quarrel and
stay the fight; but they would not.

So still the battle raged, till Arthur drew a little back
r breath and a few moments' rest; but Accolon came
after him, following fiercely and crying aloud, "It is no
me for me to suffer thee to rest," and therewith set upon
m. Then Arthur, full of scorn and rage, lifted up his
vord and struck Sir Accolon upon the helm so mightily
at he drove him to his knees; but with the force of that
eat stroke his brittle, treacherous sword broke short off at
e hilt and fell down in the grass among the blood, leaving
e pommel only in his hand. At that, King Arthur thought
ithin himself that all was over, and secretly prepared his
ind for death, yet kept himself so knightly sheltered by
s shield that he lost no ground, and made as though he
t had hope and cheer. Then said Sir Accolon, "Sir
night, thou now art overcome and canst endure no longer,
eing thou art weaponless, and hast lost already so much
ood. Yet am I fully loth to slay thee; yield, then, there-
re, to me as recreant." "Nay," said King Arthur, "that
ay I not, for I have promised to do battle to the uttermost
the faith of my body while my life lasteth; and I had
ther die with honour than live with shame; and if it were
ssible for me to die an hundred times, I had rather die
often than yield me to thee, for though I lack weapons,
shall lack no worship, and it shall be to thy shame to slay
e weaponless." "Aha," shouted then Sir Accolon, "as
r the shame, I will not spare; look to thyself, Sir Knight,
r thou art even now but a dead man." Therewith he

drove at him with pitiless force, and struck him nea down; but Arthur evermore waxing in valour as he war in blood, pressed on Sir Accolon with his shield, and at him so fiercely with the pommel in his hand, as hur him three strides backwards.

This, therefore, so confused Sir Accolon, that rushi up, all dizzy, to deliver once again a furious blow, ev as he struck, Excalibur, by Vivien's magic, fell from his hands upon the earth. Beholding which, King Arth lightly sprang to it, and grasped it, and forthwith felt was his own good sword, and said to it, "Thou hast be from me all too long, and done me too much damag Then spying the scabbard hanging by Sir Accolon's si he sprang and pulled it from him, and cast it away as as he could throw it; for so long as he had worn it, Arth knew his life would have been kept secure. "O Knigh then said the king, "thou hast this day wrought me mu damage by this sword, but now art thou come to thy dea for I shall not warrant thee but that thou shalt suffer, we part, somewhat of that thou hast made me suffer." A therewithal King Arthur flew at him with all his mig and pulled him to the earth, and then struck off his he and gave him on the head a fearful buffet, till the blo

leaped forth. "Now v I slay thee!" cried K Arthur; for his heart v hardened, and his body on fire with fever, till a moment he forgot knightly mercy. "Slay thou mayest," said Sir colon, "for thou art best knight I ever fou and I see well that Go

ith thee; for I, as thou ast, have promised to fight is battle to the uttermost, nd never to be recreant hile I live; therefore nall I never yield me with ıy mouth, and God must o with my body what he ill." And as Sir Accolon oke, King Arthur ought he knew his voice; nd parting all his blood-ained hair from out his eyes, and leaning down towards m, saw, indeed, it was his friend and own true knight. hen said he—keeping his own visor down—"I pray thee ll me of what country art thou, and what court?" "Sir night," he answered, "I am of King Arthur's court, and y name is Sir Accolon of Gaul." Then said the king, O Sir Knight! I pray thee tell me who gave thee this vord? and from whom thou hadst it?"

Then said Sir Accolon, "Woe worth this sword, for by I have gotten my death. This sword hath been in my eping now for almost twelve months, and yesterday ueen Morgan le Fay, wife of King Urience, sent it to e by a dwarf, that therewith I might in some way slay r brother, King Arthur; for thou must understand that ing Arthur is the man she hateth most in all the world, ing full of envy and jealousy because he is of greater orship and renown than any other of her blood. She veth me also as much as she doth hate him; and if she ight contrive to slay King Arthur by her craft and magic, en would she straightway kill her husband also, and ake me the king of all this land, and herself my queen, reign with me; but now," said he, "all that is over, for

this day I am come to my death." "It would have be sore treason of thee to destroy thy lord," said Arth "Thou sayest truly," answered he; "but now that I have to thee, and openly confessed to thee all that foul treas whereof I now do bitterly repent, tell me, I pray th whence art thou, and of what court?" "O Sir Accolon said King Arthur, "learn that I am myself King Arthu When Sir Accolon heard this he cried aloud, "Alas, gracious lord! have mercy on me, for I knew thee no "Thou shalt have mercy," said he, "for thou knewest not person at this time; and though by thine own confessi thou art a traitor, yet do I blame thee less, because th hast been blinded by the false crafts of my sister Morgan Fay, whom I have trusted more than all others of my k and whom I now shall know well how to punish." Th did Sir Accolon cry loudly, "O lords, and all good peop this noble knight that I have fought with is the noblest a most worshipful in all the world; for it is King Arthur, liege lord and sovereign king; and full sorely I repent tha have ever lifted lance against him, though in ignorance did it."

Then all the people fell down on their knees and pray the pardon of the king for suffering him to come to such strait. But he replied, "Pardon ye cannot have, for tru ye have nothing sinned; but here ye see what ill adventu may ofttimes befall knights-errant, for to my own hurt, a his danger also, I have fought with one of my own knight

Then the king commanded Sir Damas to surrender his brother the whole manor, Sir Outzlake only yieldi him a palfrey every year; "for," said he scornfully, would become thee better to ride on than a courser"; a ordered Damas, upon pain of death, never again to tou or to distress knights-errant riding on their adventures; a also to make full compensation and satisfaction to

THE GARMENT BURST INTO A FLAME

enty knights whom he had held in prison. "And if any them," said the king, "come to my court complaining at he hath not had full satisfaction of thee for his in-ries, by my head, thou shalt die therefor."

Afterwards, King Arthur asked Sir Outzlake to come th him to his court, where he should become a knight of s, and, if his deeds were noble, be advanced to all he ight desire.

So then he took his leave of all the people and mounted on horseback, and Sir Accolon went with him to an bey hard by, where both their wounds were dressed. But r Accolon died within four days after. And when he as dead, the king sent his body to Queen Morgan, to melot, saying that he sent her a present in return for e sword Excalibur which she had sent him by the damsel.

So, on the morrow, there came a damsel from Queen organ to the king, and brought with her the richest ntle that ever was seen, for it was set as full of precious nes as they could stand against each other, and they were e richest stones that ever the king saw. And the damsel id, "Your sister sendeth you this mantle, and prayeth u to take her gift, and in whatsoever thing she hath of-nded you, she will amend it at your pleasure." To this e king replied not, although the mantle pleased him uch. With that came in the lady of the lake, and said, ir, put not on this mantle till thou hast seen more; and nowise let it be put upon thee, or any of thy knights, till have made the bringer of it first put it on her." "It all be done as thou dost counsel," said the king. Then id he to the damsel that came from his sister, "Damsel, would see this mantle ye have brought me upon your-f." "Sir," said she, "it will not beseem me to wear a ight's garment." "By my head," said King Arthur, ou shalt wear it ere it go on any other person's back!"

And so they put it on her by force, and forthwith t
garment burst into a flame and burned the damsel in
cinders. When the king saw that, he hated that fal
witch Morgan le Fay with all his heart, and evermore w
deadly quarrel between her and Arthur to their lives' end

CHAPTER VIII

KING ARTHUR CONQUERS ROME, AND IS CROWNED EMPEROR

AND now again the second time there came ambassadors from Lucius Tiberius, Emperor of Rome, demanding, under pain of war, tribute and homage m King Arthur, and the restoration of all Gaul, which had conquered from the tribune Flollo.

When they had delivered their message, the king bade m withdraw while he consulted with his knights and ons about what reply to send. Then some of the nger knights would have slain the ambassadors, saying t their speech was a rebuke to all who heard the king ulted by it. But when King Arthur heard that, he ored none to touch them upon pain of death; and sending officers, he had them taken to a noble lodging, and there ertained with the best cheer. "And," said he, "let no nty be spared, for the Romans are great lords; and ugh their message please me not, yet must I remember ne honour."

Then the lords and knights of the Round Table were ed on to declare their counsel—what should be done n this matter; and Sir Cador of Cornwall speaking first,

said, "Sir, this message is the best news I have heard f a long time, for we have been now idle and at rest for ma days, and I trust that thou wilt make sharp war upon t Romans, wherein, I doubt not, we shall all gain honour."

"I believe well," said Arthur, "that thou art pleased, S Cador; but that is scarce an answer to the Emperor Rome, and his demand doth grieve me sorely, for truly will never pay him tribute; wherefore, lords, I pray counsel me. Now, I have understood that Belinus a Brennius, knights of Britain, held the Roman Empire their hands for many days, and also Constantine, the s of Helen, which is open evidence, not only that we o Rome no tribute, but that I, being descended from the may, of right, myself claim the empire."

Then said King Anguish of Scotland, "Sir, thou ought of right to be above all other kings, for in all Christend is there not thine equal; and I counsel thee never to ob the Romans. For when they reigned here they grievou distressed us, and put the land to great and heavy burde and here, for my part, I swear to avenge me on them wh I may, and will furnish thee with twenty thousand men- arms, whom I will pay and keep, and who shall wait thee with me, when it shall please thee."

Then the King of Little Britain rose and promised K Arthur thirty thousand men; and likewise many ot kings, and dukes, and barons, promised aid—as the l of West Wales thirty thousand men, Sir Ewaine and cousin thirty thousand men, and so forth; Sir Lanc also, and every other knight of the Round Table, promi each man a great host.

So the king, passing joyful at their courage and g will, thanked them all heartily, and sent for the aml sadors again, to hear his answer. "I will," said he, "t ye now go back straightway unto the Emperor your mas

ıd tell him that I give no heed to his words, for I have ɔnquered all my kingdoms by the will of God and by y own right arm, and I am strong enough to keep them, ithout paying tribute to any earthly creature. But, on e other hand, I claim both tribute and submission from mself, and also claim the sovereignty of all his empire, hereto I am entitled by the right of my own ancestors— metime kings of this land. And say to him that I will ortly come to Rome, and by God's grace will take possion of my empire and subdue all rebels. Wherefore, stly, I command him and all the lords of Rome that they rthwith pay me their homage, under pain of my chastiseent and wrath."

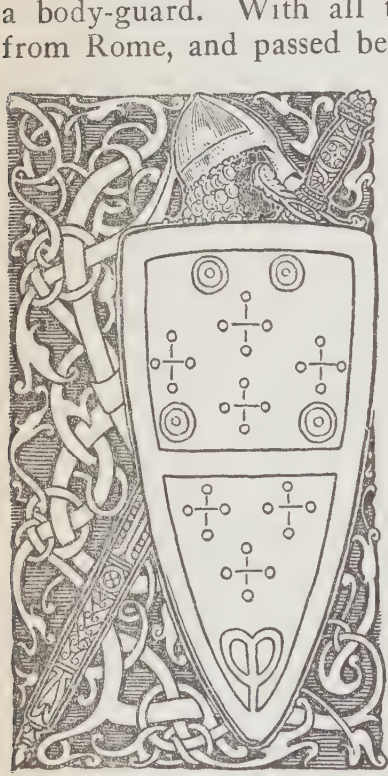
Then he commanded his treasurers to give the ambassaɔrs great gifts, and defray all their charges, and appointed r Cador to convey them worshipfully out of the land.

So when they returned to Rome and came before Luıs, he was sore angry at their words, and said, "I ɔught this Arthur would have instantly obeyed my orrs and have served me as humbly as any other king; but cause of his fortune in Gaul, he hath grown insolent."

"Ah, lord," said one of the ambassadors, "refrain from ch vain words, for truly I and all with me were fearful his royal majesty and angry countenance. I fear me ɔu hast made a rod for thee more sharp than thou hast ınted on. He meaneth to be master of this empire; d is another kind of man than thou supposest, and ldeth the most noble court of all the world. We saw n on the new-year's day, served at his table by nine kings, l the noblest company of other princes, lords, and ights that ever was in all the world; and in his person is the most manly-seeming man that liveth, and look- like to conquer all the earth."

Then Lucius sent messengers to all the subject countries

of Rome, and brought together a mighty army, and a sembled sixteen kings, and many dukes, princes, lord and admirals, and a wondrous great multitude of peop Fifty giants also, born of fiends, were set around him f a body-guard. With all that host he straightway we from Rome, and passed beyond the mountains into Ga



and burned the towns a ravaged all the country that province, in rage for submission to King Arthu Then he moved on towar Little Britain.

Meanwhile, King Arth having held a parliament York, left the realm in char of Sir Badewine and Constantine, and crossed sea from Sandwich to m Lucius. And so soon as was landed, he sent Sir G wain, Sir Bors, Sir Lion and Sir Bedivere to the E peror, commanding him move swiftly and in haste of his land, and, if not, make himself ready for tle, and not continue ravag the country and slaying harmless people." Anon th noble knights attired themselves and set forth on horseb to where they saw, in a meadow, many silken tents of di colours, and the Emperor's pavilion in the midst, wi golden eagle set above it.

Then Sir Gawain and Sir Bors rode forward, leav the other two behind in ambush, and gave King Arth

essage. To which the Emperor replied, "Return, and l your lord that I am come to conquer him and all his nd."

At this, Sir Gawain burned with anger, and cried out, had rather than all France that I might fight with thee one!"

"And I also," said Sir Bors.

Then a knight named Ganius, a near cousin of the mperor, laughed out aloud, and said, "Lo! how these itons boast and are full of pride, bragging as though they re up all the world!"

At these words, Sir Gawain could refrain no longer, t drew forth his sword and with one blow shore off nius' head; then with Sir Bors, he turned his horse d rode over waters and through woods, back to the bush where Sir Lionel and Sir Bedivere were waiting. e Romans followed fast behind them till the knights ned and stood, and then Sir Bors smote the foremost them through the body with a spear, and slew him on spot. Then came on Calibere, a huge Pavian, but Sir rs overthrew him also. And then the company of Sir nel and Sir Bedivere brake from their ambush and fell the Romans, and slew and hewed them down, and ced them to return and flee, chasing them to their ts.

But as they neared the camp, a great host more rushed th, and turned the battle backwards, and in the tur- il, Sir Bors and Sir Berel fell into the Romans' hands. en Sir Gawain saw that, he drew his good sword lotine, and swore to see King Arthur's face no more hose two knights were not delivered; and then, with d Sir Idrus, made so sore an onslaught that the Romans and left Sir Bors and Sir Berel to their friends. So Britons returned in triumph to King Arthur, having

slain more than ten thousand Romans, and lost no man worship from amongst themselves.

When the Emperor Lucius heard of that discomfitu he arose, with all his army, to crush King Arthur, a met him in the vale of Soissons. Then speaking to his host, he said, "Sirs, I admonish you that this day fight and acquit yourselves as men; and rememberi how Rome is chief of all the earth, and mistress of t universal world, suffer not these barbarous and sava Britons to abide our onset." At that, the trumpets bl so loud, that the ground trembled and shook.

Then did the rival hosts draw near each other w great shoutings; and when they closed, no tongue c tell the fury of their smiting, and the sore struggli wounds, and slaughter. Then King Arthur, with mightiest knights, rode down into the thickest of fight, and drew Excalibur, and slew as lightning slays swiftness and for force. And in the midmost crowd met a giant, Galapas by name, and struck off both legs at the knee-joints; then saying, "Now art thou better size to deal with!" smote his head off at a secc blow: and the body killed six men in falling down.

Anon, King Arthur spied where Lucius fought worked great deeds of prowess with his own hands. Fo with he rode at him, and each attacked the other pass fiercely; till at the last, Lucius struck King Arthur w a fearful wound across the face, and Arthur, in retu lifting up Excalibur on high, drove it with all his fc upon the Emperor's head, shivering his helmet, crash his head in halves, and splitting his body to the bre And when the Romans saw their Emperor dead, they in hosts of thousands; and King Arthur and his knig and all his army followed them, and slew one hund thousand men.

Then returning to the field, King Arthur rode to the ace where Lucius lay dead, and round him the kings Egypt and Ethiopia, and seventeen other kings, with xty Roman senators, all noble men. All these he dered to be carefully embalmed with aromatic gums, d laid in leaden coffins, covered with their shields and ms and banners. Then calling for three senators who ere taken prisoners, he said to them, "As the ransom of ur lives, I will that ye take these dead bodies and carry em to Rome, and there present them for me, with these tters saying I will myself be shortly there. And I suppose e Romans will beware how they again ask tribute of e; for tell them, these dead bodies that I send them e for the tribute they have dared to ask of me; and if they ish for more, when I come I will pay them the rest."

So, with that charge, the three senators departed with e dead bodies, and went to Rome; the body of the mperor being carried in a chariot blazoned with the ms of the empire, all alone, and the bodies of the kings o and two in chariots following.

After the battle, King Arthur entered Lorraine, Brabant, d Flanders, and thence, subduing all the countries as he nt, passed into Germany, and so beyond the mountains o Lombardy and Tuscany. At length he came before city which refused to obey him, wherefore he sat down fore it to besiege it. And after a long time thus spent, ng Arthur called Sir Florence, and told him they began lack food for his hosts—"And not far from hence," said , "are great forests full of cattle belonging to my enemies. then, and bring by force all that thou canst find; and e with thee Sir Gawain, my nephew, and Sir Clegis, Claremond, the Captain of Cardiff, and a strong band."

Anon those knights made ready, and rode over holts l hills, and through forests and woods, till they came

to a great meadow full of fair flowers and grass, and there they rested themselves and their horses that night. And at the dawn of the next day, Sir Gawain took his horse and rode away from his fellows to seek some adventure. Soon he saw an armed knight walking his horse by a wood's side, with his shield laced to his shoulder, and no attendant with him save a page, bearing a mighty spear; and on his shield were blazoned three gold griffins. When Sir Gawain spied him, he put his spear in rest, and riding straight to him, asked who he was. "A Tuscan,"

said he; "and thou mayest prove me when thou wilt, for thou shalt be my prisoner ere we part."

Then said Sir Gawain, "Thou vauntest thee greatly, and speakest proud words; yet I counsel thee, for all thy boastings, look to thyself the best thou canst."

At that they took their spears and ran at each other with all the might they had, and smote each other through their shields into their shoulders; and then drawing swords smote with great strokes, till the fire sprang out of their helms. Then was Sir Gawain enraged, and with his good sword

Galotine struck his enemy through shield and hauber and splintered into pieces all the precious stones of and made so huge a wound that men might see bo lungs and liver. At that the Tuscan, groaning loudl rushed on to Sir Gawain, and gave him a deep slantir stroke, and made a mighty wound and cut a great ve asunder, so that he bled fast. Then he cried out, "Bir thy wound quickly up, Sir Knight, for thou bebloode all thy horse and thy fair armour, and all the surgeons the world shall never staunch thy blood; for so shall it to whomsoever is hurt with this good sword."

Then answered Sir Gawain, "It grieveth me but littl and thy boastful words give me no fear, for thou sha suffer greater grief and sorrow ere we part; but tell n quickly who can staunch this blood."

"That can I do," said the strange knight, "and wi if thou wilt aid and succour me to become christene and to believe on God, which now I do require of thee up thy manhood."

"I am content," said Sir Gawain; "and may God he me to grant all thy wishes. But tell me first, what sought thou thus here alone, and of what land art thou?"

"Sir," said the knight, "my name is Prianius, and r father is a great prince, who hath rebelled against Ron He is descended from Alexander and Hector, and of o lineage also were Joshua and Maccabæus. I am of rig the king of Alexandria, and Africa, and all the outer isl yet I would believe in the Lord thou worshippest, and t thy labour I will give thee treasure enough. I was proud in heart that I thought none my equal, but n have I encountered with thee, who hast given me my of fighting; wherefore, I pray thee, Sir Knight, tell of thyself."

"I am no knight," said Sir Gawain; "I have b

rought up many years in the wardrobe of the noble prince
King Arthur, to mind his armour and array."

"Ah," said Prianius, "if his varlets be so keen and fierce, is knights must be passing good! Now, for the love of eaven, whether thou be knight or knave, tell me thy ame."

"By heaven!" said Gawain, "now will I tell thee the ruth. My name is Sir Gawain, and I am a knight of the Round Table."

"Now am I better pleased," said Prianius, "than if thou adst given me all the province of Paris the rich. I had ather have been torn by wild horses than that any varlet hould have won such victory over me as thou hast done. But now, Sir Knight, I warn thee that close by is the Duke f Lorraine, with sixty thousand good men of war; and e had both best flee at once, for he will find us else, and e be sorely wounded and never likely to recover. And t my page be careful that he blow no horn, for hard by e a hundred knights, my servants; and if they seize thee, o ransom of gold or silver would acquit thee."

Then Sir Gawain rode over a river to save himself, and ir Prianius after him, and so they both fled till they came his companions who were in the meadow, where they ent the night. When Sir Whishard saw Sir Gawain so urt, he ran to him weeping, and asked him who it was had ounded him; and Sir Gawain told him how he had ught with that man—pointing to Prianius—who had ives to heal them both. "But I can tell ye other tidings," id he—"that soon we must encounter many enemies, for great army is close to us in our front."

Then Prianius and Sir Gawain alighted and let their rses graze while they unarmed, and when they took their rmour and their clothing off, the hot blood ran down eshly from their wounds till it was piteous to see. But

Prianius took from his page a vial filled from the fou rivers that flow out of Paradise, and anointed both thei wounds with a certain balm, and washed them with th water, and within an hour afterwards they were both a sound and whole as ever they had been. Then, at th sound of a trumpet, all the knights were assembled to cour cil; and after much talking, Prianius said, "Cease you words, for I warn you in yonder wood ye shall find knigh out of number, who will put out cattle for a decoy to lea you on; and ye are not seven hundred!"

"Nevertheless," said Sir Gawain, "let us at once encoun ter them, and see what they can do; and may the best hav the victory."

Then they saw suddenly an earl named Sir Ethelwol and the Duke of Duchmen come leaping out of ambus of the woods in front, with many a thousand after them and all rode straight down to the battle. And Sir Gawai full of ardour and courage, comforted his knights, sayin "They all are ours." Then the seven hundred knigh in one close company, set spurs to their horses and bega to gallop, and fiercely met their enemies. And then we men and horses slain and overthrown on every side, an in and out amidst them all, the knights of the Roun Table pressed and thrust, and smote down to the earth a who withstood them, till at length the whole of them turn back and fled.

"By Heaven!" said Sir Gawain, "this gladdeneth wo my heart, for now behold them as they flee! they are fu seventy thousand less in number than they were an ho ago!"

Thus was the battle quickly ended, and a great host high lords and knights of Lombardy and Saracens l dead upon the field. Then Sir Gawain and his compa collected a great plenty of cattle, and of gold and silv

O PRIANIUS WAS CHRISTENED, AND MADE
DUKE AND KNIGHT OF THE ROUND TABLE

nd all kind of treasure, and returned to King Arthur, vhere he still kept the siege.

"Now God be thanked," cried he; "but who is he that tandeth yonder by himself, and seemeth not a prisoner?"

"Sir," said Sir Gawain, "he is a good man with his veapons, and hath matched me; but cometh hither to be nade a Christian. Had it not been for his warnings, we one of us should have been here this day. I pray thee, nerefore, let him be baptized, for there can be few nobler nen, or better knights."

So Prianius was christened, and made a duke and knight f the Round Table.

Presently afterwards, they made a last attack upon the ty, and entered by the walls on every side; and as the en were rushing to the pillage, came the duchess forth, ith many ladies and damsels, and knelt before King rthur; and besought him to receive their submission. To hom the king made answer, with a noble countenance, Madam, be well assured that none shall harm ye, or your dies; neither shall any that belong to thee be hurt; but the uke must abide my judgment." Then he commanded stay the assault and took the keys from the duke's dest son, who brought them kneeling. Anon the duke as sent a prisoner to Dover for his life, and rents and xes were assigned for dowry of the duchess and her ildren.

Then went he on with all his hosts, winning all towns d castles, and wasting them that refused obedience, till he me to Viterbo. From thence he sent to Rome, to ask e senators whether they would receive him for their lord d governor. In answer, came out to him all the Senate no remained alive, and the Cardinals, with a majestic ret- ue and procession; and laying great treasures at his feet, ey prayed him to come in at once to Rome, and there be

peaceably crowned as Emperor. "At this next Christmas," said King Arthur, "will I be crowned, and hold my Round Table in your city."

Anon he entered Rome, in mighty pomp and state; and after him came all his hosts, and his knights, and princes and great lords, arrayed in gold and jewels, such as never were beheld before. And then was he crowned Emperor by the Pope's hands, with all the highest solemnity that could be made.

Then after his coronation, he abode in Rome for a season, settling his lands and giving kingdoms to his knights and servants, to each one after his deserving and in such wise fashion that no man among them all complained. Also he made many dukes and earls and loaded all his men-at-arms with riches and great treasures.

When all this was done, the lords and knights, and all the men of great estate, came together before him, and said, "Noble Emperor! by the blessing of Eternal God thy mortal warfare is all finished, and thy conquests all achieved; for now in all the world is none so great and mighty as to dare make war with thee. Wherefore we beseech and heartily pray thee of thy noble grace, to turn thee homeward, and to give us also leave to see our wives and homes again, for now we have been from them a long season, and all thy journey is completed with great honour and worship."

"Ye say well," replied he, "and to tempt God is no wisdom; therefore make ready in all haste, and turn we home to England."

So King Arthur returned with his knights and lords and armies, in great triumph and joy, through all the countries he had conquered, and commanded that no man, upon pain of death, should rob or do any violence by the way

nd crossing the sea, he came at length to Sandwich, where ueen Guinevere received him, and made great joy at his rival. And through all the realm of Britain was there ch rejoicing as no tongue can tell.

CHAPTER IX

THE ADVENTURES OF SIR LANCELOT DU LAKE

THEN, at the following Pentecost, was held a fe of the Round Table at Caerleon, with high spl dour; and all the knights thereof resorted to t court, and held many games and jousts. And therein S Lancelot increased in fame and worship above all men, f he overthrew all comers, and never was unhorsed worsted, save by treason or enchantment.

When Queen Guinevere had seen his wondrous fea she held him in great favour, and smiled more on him th on any other knight. And ever since he first had gone bring her to King Arthur, had Lancelot thought on her fairest of all ladies, and done his best to win her gra So the queen often sent for him, and bade him tell of birth and strange adventures: how he was only son of gr King Ban of Brittany, and how, one night, his father, w his mother Helen and himself, fled from his burning cast how his father, groaning deeply, fell to the ground and di of grief and wounds, and how his mother, running to h husband, left himself alone; how, as he thus lay waili came the lady of the lake, and took him in her arms a went with him into the midst of the waters, where, with cousins Lionel and Bors, he had been cherished all childhood until he came to King Arthur's court; and h this was the reason why men called him Lancelot du La

Anon it was ordained by King Arthur, that in ev year at Pentecost there should be held a festival of all knights of the Round Table at Caerleon, or such ot place as he should choose. And at those festivals sho

e told publicly the most famous adventures of any knight uring the past year.

So, when Sir Lancelot saw Queen Guinevere rejoiced o hear his wanderings and adventures, he resolved to set orth yet again, and win more worship still, that he might nore increase her favour. Then he bade his cousin Sir ionel make ready, "for," said he, "we two will seek adenture." So they mounted their horses—armed at all oints—and rode into a vast forest; and when they had assed through it, they came to a great plain, and the eather being very hot about noontide, Sir Lancelot reatly longed to sleep. Then Sir Lionel espied a great pple-tree standing by a hedge, and said, "Brother, yonder a fair shadow where we may rest ourselves and horses." "I am full glad of it," said Sir Lancelot, "for all these ven years I have not been so sleepy."

So they alighted there, and tied their horses up to sunly trees; and Sir Lionel waked and watched while Sir ancelot fell asleep, and slept passing fast.

In the meanwhile came three knights, riding as fast flyg as ever they could ride, and after them followed a sine knight; but when Sir Lionel looked at him, he thought had never seen so great and strong a man, or so well rnished and apparelled. Anon he saw him overtake the t of those who fled, and smite him to the ground; then me he to the second, and smote him such a stroke that rse and man went to the earth; then rode he to the third, ewise, and struck him off his horse more than a spear's gth. With that he lighted from his horse, and bound three knights fast with the reins of their own bridles.

When Sir Lionel saw this he thought the time was come prove himself against him, so quietly and cautiously, he should wake Sir Lancelot, he took his horse and unted and rode after him. Presently overtaking him,

he cried aloud to him to turn, which instantly he did, and smote Sir Lionel so hard that horse and man went down forthwith. Then took he up Sir Lionel, and threw him bound over his own horse's back; and so he served the three other knights, and rode them av to his own castle. There they were disarmed, stripp naked, and beaten with thorns, and afterwards thrust int deep prison, where many more knights, also, made gr moans and lamentations, saying, "Alas, alas! there is no n can help us but Sir Lancelot, for no other knight can ma this tyrant Turquine, our conqueror."

But all this while, Sir Lancelot lay sleeping soun under the apple-tree. And, as it chanced, there pas that way four queens of high estate, riding upon four wh mules, under four canopies of green silk borne on spe to keep them from the sun. As they rode thus, they he a great horse grimly neigh, and, turning them about, s saw a sleeping knight that lay all armed under an ap tree; and when they saw his face, they knew it was Lancelot of the Lake.

Then they began to strive which of them should have the care of him. But Queen Morgan le Fay, King Arthur's half-sister, the great sorceress, was one of them, and said, "We need not strive for

n. I have enchanted him, so that for six hours more he ll not wake. Let us take him to my castle, and, when he kes, himself shall choose which one of us he would rather ve." So Sir Lancelot was laid upon his shield and borne horseback between two knights, to the castle, and there l in a cold chamber, till the spell should pass.

Anon, they sent him a fair damsel, bearing his supper, o asked him, "What cheer?"

I cannot tell, fair damsel," said he, "for I know not I came into this castle, if it were not by enchantment."

Sir," said she, "be of good heart, and to-morrow at the n of day, ye shall know more."

nd so she left him alone, and there he lay all night. he morning early came the four queens to him, pass- richly dressed; and said, "Sir Knight, thou must under- d that thou art our prisoner, and that we know thee well

for King Ban's son, Sir Lancelot du Lake. And thou we know full well there is one lady only in this world n have thy love, and she Queen Guinevere—King Arthu wife—yet now are we resolved to have thee to serve one us; choose, therefore, of us four which thou wilt serve. am Queen Morgan le Fay, Queen of the land of Gore, a here also is the Queen of Northgales, and the Queen Eastland, and the Queen of the Out Isles. Choose, th at once, for else shalt thou abide here, in this prison, thy death."

"It is a hard case," said Sir Lancelot, "that eithe must die, or choose one of you for my mistress! Yet I I rather die in this prison than serve any living creat against my will. So take this for my answer. I will se none of ye, for ye be false enchantresses. And as for lady, Queen Guinevere, whom lightly ye have spoken were I at liberty I would prove it upon you or upon yo she is the truest lady living to her lord the king."

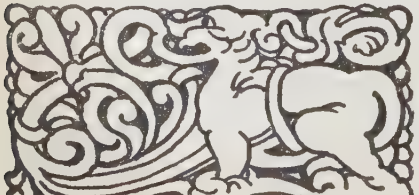
"Well," said the queen, "is this your answer, that ye fuse us all?"

"Yea, on my life," said Lancelot, "refused ye be of m

So they departed from him in great wrath, and left h sorrowfully grieving in his dungeon.

At noon the damsel came to him and brought his dinn and asked him as before, "What cheer?"

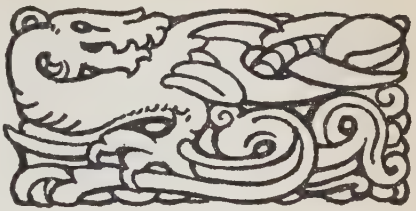
"Truly, fair damsel," said Sir Lancelot, "in all my never so ill."



"Sir," replied she, grieve to see ye so, but i do as I advise, I can h ye out of this distress, will do so if you pro me a boon."

"Fair damsel," said

ancelot, "right willingly
ill I grant it thee, for
rely do I dread these four
itch-queens, who have
estroyed and slain many
good knight with their
chantments."



Then said the damsel, "Sir, wilt thou promise me to
lp my father on next Tuesday, for he hath a tournament
th the King of Northgales, and last Tuesday lost the
ld through three knights of King Arthur's court, who
me against him. And if next Tuesday thou wilt aid him,
morrow, before daylight, by God's grace, I will deliver
ee."

"Fair maiden," said Sir Lancelot, "tell me thy father's
me and I will answer thee."

'My father is King Bagdemagus," said she.

'I know him well," replied Sir Lancelot, "for a noble
g and a good knight; and by the faith of my body I will
him all the service I am able on that day."

'Grammercy to thee, Sir Knight," said the damsel. "To-
rrow, when thou art delivered from this place, ride ten
es hence unto an abbey of white monks, and there abide
il I bring my father to thee."

'So be it," said Sir Lancelot, "as I am a true knight."

o she departed, and on the morrow, early, came again,
let him out of twelve gates, differently locked, and
ught him to his armour; and when he was all armed, she
ught him his horse also, and lightly he saddled him, and
a great spear in his hand, and mounted and rode forth,
ng, as he went, "Fair damsel, I shall not fail thee, by
grace of God."

nd all that day he rode in a great forest, and could
no highway, and spent the night in the wood; but the

next morning found his road, and came to the abbey white monks. And there he saw King Bagdemagus a his daughter waiting for him. So when they were gether in a chamber, Sir Lancelot told the king how had been betrayed by an enchantment, and how his brot Lionel was gone he knew not where, and how the dam had delivered him from the castle of Queen Morgan Fay. "Wherefore while I live," said he, "I shall do serv to herself and all her kindred."

"Then am I sure of thy aid," said the king, "on Tues now next coming?"

"Yea, sir, I shall not fail thee," said Sir Lancelot; " what knights were they who last week defeated thee, took part with the King of Northgales?"

"Sir Mador de la Port, Sir Modred, and Sir Gah tine," replied the king.

"Sir," said Sir Lancelot, "as I understand, the tou ment shall take place but three miles from this abbey; s then to me here three knights of thine, the best thou h and let them all have plain white shields, such as I will; then will we four come suddenly into the midst tween both parties, and fall upon thy enemies, and gr them all we can, and none will know us who we are."

So, on the Tuesday, Sir Lancelot and the three kni lodged themselves in a small grove hard by the lists. T came into the field the King of Northgales, with one h dred and sixty helms, and the three knights of King thur's court, who stood apart by themselves. And v King Bagdemagus had arrived, with eighty helms, companies set all their spears in rest and came toge with a mighty clash, wherein were slain twelve knigh King Bagdemagus, and six of the King of Northgales; the party of King Bagdemagus was driven back.

With that, came Sir Lancelot, and thrust into the th

est of the press, and smote down with one spear five knights, and brake the backs of four, and cast down the King of Northgales, and brake his thigh by the fall. When the three knights of Arthur's court saw this, they rode at Sir Lancelot, and each after other attacked him; but he overthrew them all, and smote them nigh to death. Then, taking a new spear, he bore down to the ground sixteen more knights, and hurt them all so sorely, that they could carry arms no more that day. And when his spear at length was broken, he took yet another, and smote down twelve knights more, the most of whom he wounded mortally, till in the end the party of the King of Northgales would joust no more, and the victory was cried to King Bagdemagus.

Then Sir Lancelot rode forth with King Bagdemagus o his castle, and there he feasted with great cheer and welcome, and received many royal gifts. And on the morow he took leave and went to find his brother Lionel.

Anon, by chance, he came to the same forest where the our queens had found him sleeping, and there he met a amsel riding on a white palfrey. When they had saluted ach other, Sir Lancelot said, "Fair damsel, knowest thou where any adventures may be had in this country?"

"Sir Knight," said she, "there are adventures great nough close by if thou darest prove them."

"Why should I not," said he, "since for that cause I came ere?"

"Sir," said the damsel, "hard by this place there dwellh a knight that cannot be defeated by any man, so great nd perilously strong he is. His name is Sir Turquine, and the prisons of his castle lie three score knights and four, ostly from King Arthur's court, whom he hath taken with s own hands. But promise me, ere thou undertakest their eliverance, to go and help me afterwards, and free me and

many other ladies that are distressed by a false knight.

"Bring me but to this felon Turquine," quoth Sir Lance lot, "and I will afterwards fulfil all your wishes."

So the damsel went before, and brought him to a forc and a tree whereon a great brass basin hung; and Sir Lance lot beat with his spear-end upon the basin, long and harc until he beat the bottom of it out, but he saw nothing. The he rode to and fro before the castle gates for well-nigh hal an hour, and anon saw a great knight riding from the dis tance, driving a horse before him, across which hung a armed man bound. And when they came near, Sir Lance lot knew the prisoner for a knight of the Round Table By that time, the great knight who drove the prisoner sa Sir Lancelot, and each of them began to settle his spea and to make ready.

"Fair sir," then said Sir Lancelot, "put off that wounde knight, I pray thee, from his horse, and let him rest whil thou and I shall prove our strength upon each other; fo as I am told, thou doest, and hast done, a great shame an injury to knights of the Round Table. Wherefore, warn thee now, defend thyself."

"If thou mayest be of the Round Table," answered Tu quine, "I defy thee, and all thy fellows."

"That is saying overmuch," said Sir Lancelot.

Then, setting their lances in rest, they spurred the horses towards each other, as fast as they could go, an smote so fearfully upon each other's shields, that both the horses' backs brake under them. As soon as they coul clear their saddles, they took their shields before them, an drew their swords, and came together eagerly, and fougl with great and grievous strokes; and soon they both ha many grim and fearful wounds, and bled in streams. Th they fought two hours and more, thrusting and smiting each other, wherever they could hit.

COMBAT OF SIR LANCELOT AND SIR TURQUINE

Anon they both were breathless, and stood leaning on heir swords.

"Now, comrade," said Sir Turquine, "let us wait awhile, nd answer me what I shall ask thee."

"Say on," said Lancelot.

"Thou art," said Turquine, "the best man I ever met, nd seemest like one that I hate above all other knights hat live; but if thou be not he, I will make peace with hee, and for sake of thy great valour, will deliver all the hree score prisoners and four who lie within my dun-geons, and thou and I will be companions evermore. Tell ne, then, thy name."

"Thou sayest well," replied Sir Lancelot; "but who is e thou hatest so above all others?"

"His name," said Turquine, "is Sir Lancelot of the Lake; nd he slew my brother Sir Carados, at the dolorous tower; vherefore, if ever I shall meet with him, one of us two shall lay the other; and thereto I have sworn by a great oath. And to discover and destroy him I have slain a hundred nights, and crippled utterly as many more, and many have ied in my prisons; and now, as I have told thee, I have nany more therein, who all shall be delivered, if thou tell ne thy name, and it be not Sir Lancelot."

"Well," said Lancelot, "I am that knight, son of King Ban of Benwick, and knight of the Round Table; so now I efy thee to do thy best!"

"Aha!" said Turquine, with a shout, "is it then so at ast! Thou art more welcome to my sword than ever night or lady was to feast, for never shall we part till ne of us be dead."

Then did they hurtle together like two wild bulls, slash-ng and lashing with their shields and swords, and some-mes falling both on to the ground. For two more hours ey fought so, and at the last Sir Turquine grew very faint,

and gave a little back, and bare his shield full low fo weariness. When Sir Lancelot saw him thus, he leape upon him fiercely as a lion, and took him by the crest of hi helmet, and dragged him to his knees; and then he tor his helmet off and smote his neck asunder.

Then he arose, and went to the damsel who had brough him to Sir Turquine, and said, "I am ready, fair lady to go with thee upon thy service, but I have no horse."

"Fair sir," said she, "take ye this horse of the wounde knight who Turquine but just now was carrying to hi prisons, and send that knight on to deliver all the pris oners."

So Sir Lancelot went to the knight and prayed him fo the loan of his horse.

"Fair lord," said he, "ye are right welcome, for to-day y have saved both me and my horse; and I see that ye ar the best knight in all the world, for in my sight have y slain the mightiest man and the best knight, except thysel I ever saw."

"Sir," said Sir Lancelot, "I thank thee well; and now g into yonder castle, where thou shalt find many noble knigh of the Round Table, for I have seen their shields hung o the trees around. On yonder tree alone there are Si Key's, Sir Brandel's, Sir Marhaus', Sir Galind's, and Si Aliduke's, and many more; and also my two kinsmen shields, Sir Ector de Maris' and Sir Lionel's. And I pra you greet them all from me, Sir Lancelot of the Lake, an tell them that I bid them help themselves to any treasur they can find within the castle; and that I pray my bretl ren, Lionel and Ector, to go to King Arthur's court an stay there till I come. And by the high feast at Penteco I must be there; but now I must ride forth with this dams to fulfil my promise."

So, as they went, the damsel told him, "Sir, we are no

ear the place where the foul knight haunteth, who rob-eth and distresseth all ladies and gentlewomen travelling ast this way, against whom I have sought thy aid."

Then they arranged that she should ride on foremost, nd Sir Lancelot should follow under cover of the trees by he roadside, and if he saw her come to any mishap, he hould ride forth and deal with him that troubled her. And as the damsel rode on at a soft ambling pace, a knight nd page burst forth from the roadside and forced the amsel from her horse, till she cried out for help.

Then came Sir Lancelot rushing through the wood as ast as he might fly, and all the branches of the trees rackled and waved around him. "O thou false knight nd traitor to all knighthood!" shouted he, "who taught hee to distress fair ladies thus?"

The foul knight answered nothing, but drew out his word and rode at Sir Lancelot, who threw his spear away nd drew his own sword likewise, and struck him such a ighty blow as clave his head down to the throat. "Now ast thou the wages thou long hast earned!" said he; and so eparted from the damsel.

Then for two days he rode in a great forest, and had but anty food and lodging, and on the third day he rode over long bridge, when suddenly there started up a passing ul churl, and smote his horse across the nose, so that he arted and turned back, rearing with pain. "Why ridest ou over here without my leave?" said he.

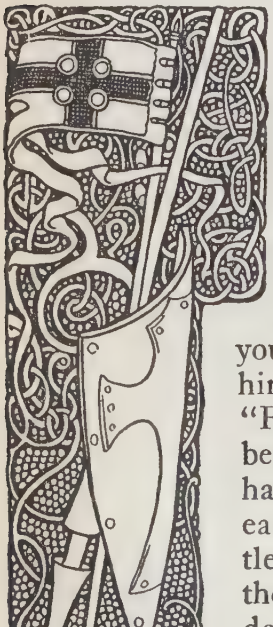
"Why should I not?" said Sir Lancelot; "there is no her way to ride."

"Thou shalt not pass by here," cried out the churl, and shed at him with a great club full of iron spikes, till Sir ancelot was fain to draw his sword and smite him dead on the earth.

At the end of the bridge was a fair village, and all the

people came and cried, "Ah, sir! a worse deed for thysel thou never didst, for thou hast slain the chief porter of th castle yonder!" But he let them talk as they pleased, an rode straight forward to the castle.

There he alighted, and tied his horse to a ring in th wall; and going in, he saw a wide green court, and though it seemed a noble place to fight in. And as he looked about he saw many people watching him from doors and win dows, making signs of warning, and saying, "Fair knight thou art unhappy." In the next moment came upon hin two great giants, well armed save their heads, and with two horrible clubs in their hands. Then he put his shiel before him, and with it warded off one giant's stroke, an



clove the other with his sword fron the head downward to the chest When the first giant saw that, h ran away mad with fear; but Si Lancelot ran after him, and smot him through the shoulder, and shor him down his back, so that he fel dead.

Then he walked onward to the castl hall, and saw a band of sixty ladies an young damsels coming forth, who knelt t him, and thanked him for their freedom "For, sir," said they, "the most of us hav been prisoners here these seven years; an have been kept at all manner of work t earn our meat, though we be all great gen tlewomen born. Blessed be the time tha thou wast born, for never did a knight deed of greater worship than thou hast thi day, and thereto will we all bear witness i all times and places! Tell us, therefor

le knight, thy name and court, that we may tell them to friends!" And when they heard it, they all cried aloud, ell may it be so, for we knew that no knight save thou uldst ever overcome those giants; and many a long day e we sighed for thee; for the giants feared no other name ong all knights but thine."

Then he told them to take the treasures of the castle as eward for their grievances, and to return to their homes, so rode away into many strange and wild countries. d at last, after many days, by chance he came, near the ht time, to a fair mansion, wherein he found an old tlewoman, who gave him and his horse good cheer. d when bedtime was come, his host brought him to a mber over a gate, and there he unarmed, and went to and fell asleep.

But soon thereafter came one riding in great haste, and ocking vehemently at the gate below, which when Sir ncelot heard, he rose and looked out of the window, , by the moonlight, saw three knights come riding cely after one man, and lashing on him all at once with ir swords, while the one knight nobly fought them all.

Then Sir Lancelot quickly armed himself, and getting ough the window, let himself down by a sheet into the lst of them, crying out, "Turn ye on me, ye cowards, leave fighting with that knight!" Then they all left Key, for the first knight was he, and began to fall upon Lancelot furiously. And when Sir Key would have e forward to assist him, Sir Lancelot refused, and cried, ave me alone to deal with them." And presently, with great strokes, he felled them all.

Then they cried out, "Sir Knight, we yield us unto thee, a man of might!"

I will not take your yielding!" said he; "yield ye to Sir , the seneschal, or I will have your lives."

"Fair Knight," said they, "excuse us in that thing, for we have chased Sir Key thus far, and should have overcome him but for thee."

"Well," said Sir Lancelot, "do as ye will, for ye may live or die; but, if ye live, ye shall be holden to Sir Key."

Then they yielded to him; and Sir Lan-

celot commanded them to go unto King Arthur's court at the next Pentecost, and say Sir Key had sent them prisoners to Queen Guinevere. And this they sware to do upon their swords.

Then Sir Lancelot knocked at the gate with his swordhilt till his hostess came and let him in again, and Sir Key also. And when the light came, Sir Key knew Sir Lancelot, and

knelt and thanked him for his courtesy, and gentlen and kindness. "Sir," said he, "I have done no more t what I ought to do, and ye are welcome; therefore le now take rest."

So when Sir Key had supped, they went to sleep, and Lancelot and he slept in the same bed. On the morr Sir Lancelot rose early, and took Sir Key's shield armour and set forth. When Sir Key arose, he found Lancelot's armour by his bedside, and his own arms g "Now, by my faith," thought he, "I know that he will gr some knights of our king's court; for those who meet will be bold to joust with him, mistaking him for me, w I, dressed in his shield and armour, shall surely rid peace."

Then Sir Lancelot, dressed in Sir Key's apparel, r long in a great forest, and came at last to a low coun full of rivers and fair meadows, and saw a bridge be him, whereon were three silk tents of divers colours, to each tent was hung a white shield, and by each sh stood a knight. So Sir Lancelot went by without speak a word. And when he had passed, the three knights it was the proud Sir Key, "who thinketh no knight e to himself, although the contrary is full often proved u him."

"By my faith!" said one of them, named Gaunter, will ride after and attack him for all his pride, and ye s watch my speed."

Then, taking shield and spear, he mounted and r after Sir Lancelot, and cried, "Abide, proud knight, turn, for thou shall not pass free!"

So Sir Lancelot turned, and each one put his spea rest and came with all his might against the other. Sir Gaunter's spear brake short, but Sir Lancelot smote down, both horse and man.

When the other knights saw this, they said, "Yonder not Sir Key, but a bigger man."

"I dare wager my head," said Sir Gilmere, "yonder ight hath slain Sir Key, and taken his horse and harness."

"Be it so, or not," said Sir Reynold, the third brother; t us now go to our brother Gaunter's rescue; we shall ve enough to do to match that knight, for, by his stature, elieve it is Sir Lancelot or Sir Tristram."

Anon they took their horses and galloped after Sir Lanot; and Sir Gilmere first assailed him, but was smitten wn forthwith, and lay stunned on the earth. Then said Reynold, "Sir Knight, thou art a strong man, and, I lieve, hast slain my two brothers, wherefore my heart is e against thee; yet, if I might with honour, I would avoid e. Nevertheless, that cannot be, so keep thyself." And they hurtled together with all their might, and each man vered his spear to pieces; and then they drew their ords and lashed out eagerly.

And as they fought, Sir Gaunter and Sir Gilmere presly arose and mounted again, and came down at full tilt on Sir Lancelot. But, when he saw them coming, he t forth all his strength, and struck Sir Reynold off his rse. Then, with two other strokes, he served the others ewise.

Anon Sir Reynold crept along the ground, with his head bloody, and came towards Sir Lancelot. "It is enough," d Lancelot. "I was not far from thee when thou wast de a knight, Sir Reynold, and know thee for a good and iant man, and was full loth to slay thee."

"Grammercy for thy gentleness!" said Sir Reynold. "I my brethren will straightway yield to thee when we w thy name, for well we know that thou art not Sir ."

"As for that," said Sir Lancelot, "be it as it may, but

ye shall yield to Queen Guinevere at the next Feast of Pe
cost as prisoners, and say that Sir Key sent ye."

Then they swore to him it should be done as he c
manded. And so Sir Lancelot passed on, and the t
brethren helped each other's wounds as best they migh

Then rode Sir Lancelot forward into a deep forest,
came upon four knights of King Arthur's court, unde
oak-tree—Sir Sagramour, Sir Ector, Sir Gawain, and
Ewaine. And when they spied him, they thought he
Sir Key. "Now by my faith," said Sir Sagramour, "I
prove Sir Key's might!" and taking his spear he rode
wards Sir Lancelot.

But Sir Lancelot was aware of him, and, setting
spear in rest, smote him so sorely, that horse and man
to the earth.

"Lo!" cried Sir Ector, "I see by the buffet that kn
hath given our fellow he is stronger than Sir Key. I
will I try what I can do against him!" So Sir Ector
his spear, and galloped at Sir Lancelot; and Sir Lanc
met him as he came, and smote him through sh
and shoulder, so that he fell, but his own spear was
broken.

"By my faith," cried Sir Ewaine, "yonder is a st
knight, and must have slain Sir Key, and taken his arm
By his strength, I see it will be hard to match him."
saying he rode towards Sir Lancelot, who met him half
and struck him so fiercely, that at one blow he overth
him also.

"Now," said Sir Gawain, "will I encounter him."
he took a good spear in his hand, and guarded himself
his shield. And he and Sir Lancelot rode against
other, with their horses at full speed, and furiously s
each other on the middle of their shields; but Sir Gaw
spear broke short asunder, and Sir Lancelot charge

ghtily upon him, that his
rse and he both fell, and
lled upon the ground.

"Ah," said Sir Lancelot,
iling, as he rode away
om the four knights,
Heaven give joy to him
no made this spear, for
ver held I better in my
nd."

But the four knights said
each other, "Truly one
ear hath felled us all."

"I dare lay my life," said Sir Gawain, "it is Sir Lance-
. I know him by his riding."

So they all departed for the court.

And as Sir Lancelot rode still in the forest, he saw a
ck bloodhound, running with its head towards the ground,
if it tracked a deer. And following after it, he came to a
eat pool of blood. But the hound, ever and anon look-
; behind, ran through a great marsh, and over a bridge
vards an old manor house. So Sir Lancelot followed,
l went into the hall, and saw a dead knight lying there,
ose wounds the hound licked. And a lady stood behind
n, weeping and wringing her hands, who cried, "O
ight! too great is the sorrow which thou hast brought
!"

"Why say ye so?" replied Sir Lancelot; "for I never
med this knight, and am full sorely grieved to see thy
row."

"Nay, sir," said the lady, "I see it is not thou hast slain
husband, for he that truly did that deed is deeply
nded, and shall never more recover."

"What is thy husband's name?" said Sir Lancelot.

"His name," she answered, "was Sir Gilbert—one of best knights in all the world; but I know not his name hath slain him."

"God send thee comfort," said Sir Lancelot, and parted again into the forest.

And as he rode, he met with a damsel who knew who cried out, "Well found, my lord! I pray ye of knighthood help my brother, who is sore wounded and c not to bleed, for he fought this day with Sir Gilbert, slew him, but was himself well-nigh slain. And there sorceress, who dwelleth in a castle hard by, and she day hath told me that my brother's wound shall neve made whole until I find a knight to go into the Ch Perilous, and bring from thence a sword and the bl cloth in which the wounded knight was wrapped."

"This is a marvellous thing!" said Sir Lancelot; what is your brother's name?"

"His name, sir," she replied, "is Sir Meliot de Log

"He is a fellow of the Round Table," said Sir Lanc "and truly will I do my best to help him."

"Then, sir," said she, "follow this way, and it will l ye to the Chapel Perilous. I will abide here till God ye hither again; for if ye speed not, there is no living kn who may achieve that adventure."

So Sir Lancelot departed, and when he came to Chapel Perilous he alighted, and tied his horse to the And as soon as he was within the churchyard, he saw o front of the chapel many shields of knights whom he known, turned upside down. Then saw he in the path thirty mighty knights, taller than any men whom he ever seen, all armed in black armour, with their sw drawn; and they gnashed their teeth upon him as he c But he put his shield before him, and took his swo hand, ready to do battle with them. And when he w

ave cut his way through them, they scattered on every de and let him pass. Then he went into the chapel, and w therein no light but of a dim lamp burning. Then he as aware of a corpse in the midst of the chapel, covered ith a silken cloth, and so stooped down and cut off a piece the cloth, whereat the earth beneath him trembled. hen saw he a sword lying by the dead knight, and taking in his hand, he hied him from the chapel. As soon as he as in the churchyard again, all the thirty knights cried it to him with fierce voices, "Sir Lancelot! lay that sword om thee, or thou diest!"

"Whether I live or die," said he, "ye shall fight for it e ye take it from me."

With that they let him pass.

And further on, beyond the chapel, he met a fair damsel, ho said, "Sir Lancelot, leave that sword behind thee, or ou diest."

"I will not leave it," said Sir Lancelot, "for any asking."

"Then, gentle knight," said the damsel, "I pray thee kiss e once."

"Nay," said Sir Lancelot, "that God forbid!"

"Alas!" cried she, "I have lost all my labour! but hadst ou kissed me, thy life's days had been all done!"

"Heaven save me from thy subtle crafts!" said Sir Lanlot; and therewith took his horse and galloped forth.

And when he was departed, the damsel sorrowed greatly, d died in fifteen days. Her name was Ellawes, the sorress.

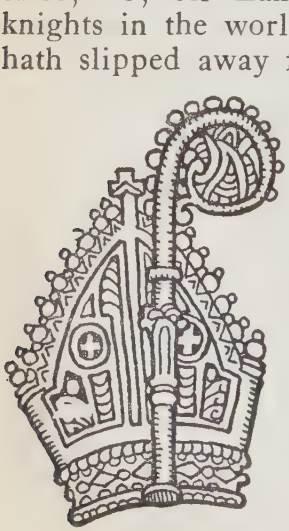
Then came Sir Lancelot to Sir Meliot's sister, who, nen she saw him, clapped her hands and wept for joy, d took him to the castle hard by, where Sir Meliot was. id when Sir Lancelot saw Sir Meliot, he knew him, ough he was pale as ashes for loss of blood. And Meliot, when he saw Sir Lancelot, kneeled to him

and cried aloud, "O lord, Sir Lancelot! help m

And thereupon, Sir Lancelot went to him and touch his wounds with the sword, and wiped them with the pi of bloody cloth. And immediately he was as whole though he had been never wounded. Then was there gr joy between him and Sir Meliot; and his sister made Lancelot good cheer. So on the morrow, he took his lea that he might go to King Arthur's court, "for," said "it draweth nigh the Feast of Pentecost, and there, by Go grace, shall ye then find me."

And riding through many strange countries, o marshes and valleys, he came at length before a castle. he passed by he heard two little bells ringing, and looki up, he saw a falcon flying overhead, with bells tied to feet, and long strings dangling from them. And as the f con flew past an elm-tree, the strings caught in the boug so that she could fly no further.

In the meanwhile, came a lady from the castle, a cried, "O, Sir Lancelot! as thou art the flower of knights in the world, help me to get my hawk, for hath slipped away from me, and if she be lost, my l



my husband is so hasty, he will sur slay me!"

"What is thy lord's name?" said Lancelot.

"His name," said she, "is Sir P lot, a knight of the King of No gales."

"Fair lady," said Sir Lance "since you know my name, and quire me, on my knighthood, to h you, I will do what I can to get y hawk."

And thereupon alighting, he

is horse to the same tree, and prayed the lady to unarm im. So when he was unarmed, he climbed up and reached he falcon, and threw it to the lady.

Then suddenly came down, out of the wood, her husand, Sir Phelot, all armed, with a drawn sword in his and, and said, "O, Sir Lancelot! now have I found thee s I would have thee!" and stood at the trunk of the tree slay him.

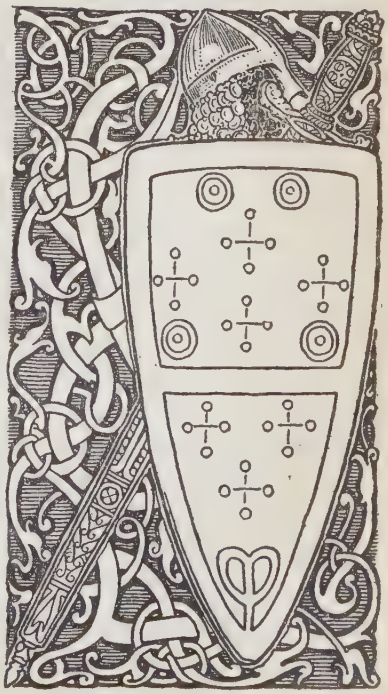
"Ah, lady!" cried Sir Lancelot, "why have ye betrayed e?"

"She hath done as I commanded her," said Sir Phelot, nd thine hour is come that thou must die."

"It were shame," said Lancelot, "for an armed to slay unarmed man."

"Thou hast no other favour om me," said Sir Phelot.

"Alas!" cried Sir Lancelot, hat ever any knight should e weaponless!" And look- g overhead, he saw a great ough without leaves, and renched it off the tree, and ddenly leaped down. Then r Phelot struck at him ea- rly, thinking to have slain m, but Sir Lancelot put aside stroke with the bough, and erewith smote him on the de of the head, till he fell ooning to the ground. And ring his sword from out his nds, he shore his neck rough the body. Then did lady shriek dismally, and



swooned as though she would die. But Sir Lancelot p on his armour, and with haste took his horse and depart thence, thanking God he had escaped that peril.

And as he rode through a valley, among many wild way he saw a knight, with a drawn sword, chasing a lady to sl her. And seeing Sir Lancelot, she cried and prayed to hi to come and rescue her.

At that he went up, saying, "Fie on thee, knight! wh wilt thou slay this lady? Thou doest shame to thyself a all knights."

"What hast thou to do between me and my wife?" r plied the knight. "I will slay her in spite of thee."

"Thou shalt not harm her," said Sir Lancelot, "till v have first fought together."

"Sir," answered the knight, "thou doest ill, for this la hath betrayed me."

"He speaketh falsely," said the lady, "for he is jealo of me without cause, as I shall answer before Heave but as thou art named the most worshipful knight in t world, I pray thee of thy true knighthood to save me, f he is without mercy."

"Be of good cheer," said Sir Lancelot; "it shall not within his power to harm thee."

"Sir," said the knight, "I will be ruled as ye will ha me."

So Sir Lancelot rode between the knight and the la And when they had ridden awhile, the knight cried suddenly to Sir Lancelot to turn and see what men th were who came riding after them; and while Sir Lancel thinking not of treason, turned to look, the knight, w one great stroke, smote off the lady's head.

Then was Sir Lancelot passing wroth, and cried, "Th traitor! Thou hast shamed me forever!" and, alighti from his horse, he drew his sword to have slain him

antly; but the knight fell on the ground and clasped Sir ancelot's knees, and cried out for mercy. "Thou shame-ul knight," answered Lancelot, "thou mayest have no ıercy, for thou showedst none, therefore arise and fight ith me."

"Nay," said the knight, "I will not rise till thou dost rant me mercy."

"Now will I deal fairly by thee," said Sir Lancelot; "I ill unarm me to my shirt, and have my sword only in my and, and if thou canst slay me thou shalt be quit for-er."

"That will I never do," said the knight.

"Then," answered Sir Lancelot, "take this lady and the ead, and bear it with thee, and swear to me upon thy vord never to rest until thou comest to Queen Guinevere."

"That will I do," said he.

"Now," said Sir Lancelot, "tell me thy name."

"It is Pedivere," answered the knight.

"In a shameful hour wert thou born," said Sir Lancelot. So Sir Pedivere departed, bearing with him the dead dy and her head. And when he came to Winchester, here the queen was with King Arthur, he told them all e truth; and afterwards did great and heavy penance any years, and became an holy hermit.

"So two days before the Feast of Pentecost, Sir Lance-t returned to the court, and King Arthur was full glad of s coming. And when Sir Gawain, Sir Ewaine, Sir Sa-amour, and Sir Ector saw him in Sir Key's armour, they iew well it was he who had smitten them all down with ie spear. Anon came all the knights Sir Turquine had ken prisoners, and gave worship and honour to Sir Lance-t. Then Sir Key told the king how Sir Lancelot had scued him when he was in near danger of his death; nd," said Sir Key, "he made the knights yield, not to him-

self, but me. And by Heaven! because Sir Lancelot to my armour and left me his, I rode in peace, and no m would have aught to do with me." Then came the knigh who fought with Sir Lancelot at the long bridge a yielded themselves also to Sir Key, but he said nay, he h not fought with them. "It is Sir Lancelot," said he, "th overcame ye." Next came Sir Meliot de Logres, and to King Arthur how Sir Lancelot had saved him from death

And so all Sir Lancelot's deeds and great adventur were made known; how the four sorceress-queens had hi in prison; how he was delivered by the daughter of Ki Bagdemagus, and what deeds of arms he did at the tourn ment between the King of North Wales and King Bagd magus. And so, at that festival, Sir Lancelot had the grea est name of any knight in all the world, and by high and lo was he the most honoured of all men.

CHAPTER X

THE ADVENTURES OF SIR BEAUMAINS OR SIR GARETH

AGAIN King Arthur held the Feast of Pentecost, with all the Table Round, and after his custom sat in the banquet hall, before beginning meat, iting for some adventure. Then came there to the king squire and said, "Lord, now may ye go to meat, for here damsel cometh with some strange adventure." So the ng was glad, and sat down to meat.

Anon the damsel came in and saluted him, praying him r succour. "What wilt thou?" said the king. "Lord," swered she, "my mistress is a lady of great renown, but at this time besieged by a tyrant, who will not suffer her go out of her castle; and because here in thy court the ights are called the noblest in the world, I come to pray ee for thy succour." "Where dwelleth your lady?" an- ered the king. "What is her name, and who is he that th besieged her?" "For her name," replied the damsel, s yet I may not tell it; but she is a lady of worship and eat lands. The tyrant that besiegeth her and wasteth her ds is called the Red Knight of the Redlands." "I know n not," said Arthur. "But I know him, lord," said Sir

Gawain, "and he is one of the most perilous knights in al the world. Men say he hath the strength of seven; an from him I myself once hardly escaped with life." "Fai damsel," said the king, "there be here many knights tha would gladly do their uttermost to rescue your lady, but un less ye tell me her name, and where she dwelleth, none o my knights shall go with you by my leave."

Now, there was a stripling at the court called Beau mains, who served in the king's kitchen, a fair youth an of great stature. Twelve months before this time h had come to the king as he sat at meat, at Whitsuntide, an prayed three gifts of him. And being asked what gift he answered, "As for the first gift I will ask it now, bu the other two gifts I will ask on this day twelve month wheresoever ye hold your high feast." Then said Kin Arthur, "What is thy first request?" "This, lord," said h "that thou wilt give me meat and drink enough for twelv months from this time, and then will I ask my other tw gifts." And the king seeing that he was a goodly youth, an deeming that he was come of honourable blood, had grante his desire, and given him into the charge of Sir Key, th steward. But Sir Key scorned and mocked the youth, cal ing him Beaumains, because his hands were large and fai and putting him into the kitchen, where he had served fo twelve months as a scullion, and, in spite of all his churlis treatment, had faithfully obeyed Sir Key. But Sir Lan celot and Sir Gawain were angered when they saw Sir Ke so churlish to a youth that had so worshipful a bearing, an ofttimes had they given him gold and clothing.

And now at this time came young Beaumains to the kin while the damsel was there, and said, "Lord, now I than thee well and heartily that I have been twelve months ke in thy kitchen, and have had full sustenance. Now will ask my two remaining gifts." "Ask," said King Arthu

on my good faith." "These, lord," said he, "shall be my vo gifts—the one, that thou wilt grant me this adventure f the damsel, for to me of right it belongeth; and the other, iat thou wilt bid Sir Lancelot make me a knight, for of im only will I have that honour; and I pray that he may de after me and make me a knight when I require him." Be it as thou wilt," replied the king. But thereupon the amsel was full wroth, and said, "Shall I have a kitchen age for this adventure?" and so she took horse and eparted.

Then came one to Beaumains, and told him that a dwarf ith a horse and armour was waiting for him. And all en marvelled whence these things came. But when he as on horseback and armed, scarce anyone at the court as a goodlier man than he. And coming into the hall, e took his leave of the king and Sir Gawain, and prayed r Lancelot to follow him. So he rode after the damsel, d many of the court went out to see him, so richly arrayed d horsed; yet he had neither shield nor spear. Then Sir ey cried, "I also will ride after the kitchen boy, and see hether he will obey me now." And taking his horse, he de after him, and said, "Know ye not me, Beaumains?" Yea," said he, "I know thee for an ungentle knight, there- re beware of me." Then Sir Key put his spear in rest d ran at him, but Beaumains rushed upon him with his ord in his hand, and therewith, putting aside the spear, uck Sir Key so sorely in the side, that he fell down, as if ad. Then he alighted, and took his shield and spear, and de his dwarf ride upon Sir Key's horse.

By this time, Sir Lancelot had come up, and Beaumains ering to tilt with him, they both made ready. And their rses came together so fiercely that both fell to the earth, l sorely bruised. Then they arose, and Beaumains, put- g up his shield before him, offered to fight Sir Lancelot,

on foot. So they rushed upon each other, striking, an thrusting, and parrying, for the space of an hour. An Lancelot marvelled at the strength of Beaumains, for h fought more like a giant than a man, and his fighting wa passing fierce and terrible. So, at the last, he said, "Figh not so sorely, Beaumains; our quarrel is not such that w may not now cease." "True," answered Beaumains; "ye it doth me good to feel thy might, though I have not ye proved my uttermost." "By my faith," said Lancelot, " had as much as I could do to save myself from you un shamed, therefore be in no doubt of any earthly knight. "May I, then, stand as a proved knight?" said Beaumain "For that will I be thy warrant," answered Lancelo "Then, I pray thee," said he, "give me the order of knigh hood." "First, then, must thou tell me of thy name an kindred," said Sir Lancelot. "If thou wilt tell them to n other, I will tell thee," answered he. "My name is Garet of Orkney, and I am own brother to Sir Gawain." "Ah said Sir Lancelot, "at that am I full glad; for, truly I deemed thee to be of gentle blood." So then he knighte Beaumains, and, after that, they parted company, and S Lancelot, returning to the court, took up Sir Key on h shield. And hardly did Sir Key escape with his lif from the wound Beaumains had given him; but all me blamed him for his ungentle treatment of so brave knight.

Then Sir Beaumains rode forward, and soon overtoo the damsel; but she said to him, in scorn, "Return agai base kitchen page! What art thou, but a washer-up dishes!" "Damsel," said he, "say to me what thou wilt, will not leave thee; for I have undertaken to King Arth to relieve thy adventure, and I will finish it to the end, die." "Thou finish my adventure!" said she—"anon th shalt meet one whose face thou wilt not even dare to lo

t." "I shall attempt it," answered he. So, as they rode thus, nto a wood, there met them a nan, fleeing, as for his life. Whither fleest thou?" said Sir Beaumains. "O lord!" he answered, "help me; for, in a valley ard by, there are six thieves, who ave taken my lord, and bound im, and I fear will slay him." Bring me thither," said Sir Beaumains. So they rode to the place, nd Sir Beaumains rushed after the thieves, and smote one, t the first stroke, so that he died; and then, with two other lows, slew a second and third. Then fled the other three, nd Sir Beaumains rode after them, and overtook and slew aem all. Then he returned and unbound the knight. nd the knight thanked him, and prayed him to ride to his astle, where he would reward him. "Sir," answered Sir eaumains, "I will have no reward of thee, for but this day as I made knight by the most noble Sir Lancelot; and sides, I must go with this damsel." Then the knight gged the damsel to rest that night at his castle. So they l rode thither, and ever the damsel scoffed at Sir Beaumains as a kitchen boy, and laughed at him before the night their host, so that he set his meat before him at a wer table, as though he were not of their company.

And on the morrow, the damsel and Sir Beaumains took eir leave of the knight, and thanking him departed. nen they rode on their way till they came to a great for-, through which flowed a river, and there was but one pasge over it whereat stood two knights armed to hinder the y. "Wilt thou match those two knights," said the damsel Sir Beaumains, "or return again?" "I would not return,"

said he, "though they were six." Therewith he galloped i
the water, and swam his horse into the middle of the strea
And there, in the river, one of the knights met him, a
they brake their spears together, and then drew their swor
and smote fiercely at each other. And at the last, Sir Be
mains struck the other mightily upon the helm,
that he fell down stunned into the water, and was drown
Then Sir Beaumains spurred his horse on to the land, wh
instantly the other knight fell on him. And they also br
their spears upon each other, and then drew their swor
and fought savagely and long together. And after ma
blows, Sir Beaumains clove through the knight's skull do
to the shoulders. Then rode Sir Beaumains to the dam
but ever she still scoffed at him, and said, "Alas! tha
kitchen page should chance to slay two such brave knigh
Thou deemest now that thou hast done a mighty deed,
it is not so; for the first knight's horse stumbled, and t
was he drowned—not by thy strength; and as for the seco
knight, thou wentest by chance behind him, and didst
him shamefully." "Damsel," said Sir Beaumains, "
what ye list, I care not so I may win your lady; and woul
thou give me but fair language, all my care were past;
whatsoever knights I meet, I fear them not." "Thou sh
see knights that shall abate thy boast, base kitchen knav
replied she; "yet say I this for thine advantage, for if th
followest me thou wilt be surely slain, since I see all th
doest is but by chance, and not by thy own prowe
"Well, damsel," said he, "say what ye will, wherever
go I will follow."

So they rode on until the eventide, and still the dam
evermore kept chiding Sir Beaumains. Then came the
a black space of land, whereon was a black hawthorn-t
and on the tree there hung a black banner, and on the ot
side was a black shield and spear, and by them a great bl

THE ADVENTURES OF SIR GARETH AND THE DAMSEL LINET

orse, covered with silk; and hard by sat a knight armed
black armour, whose name was the Knight of the Black-
nds. When the damsel saw him, she cried out to Beau-
ains, "Flee down the valley, for thy horse is not saddled!"
Wilt thou for ever deem me coward?" answered he. With
at came the Black Knight to the damsel, and said, "Fair
msel, hast thou brought this knight from Arthur's court
be thy champion?" "Not so, fair knight," said she; "he
but a kitchen knave." "Then wherefore cometh he in
ch array?" said he; "it is a shame that he should bear
ee company." "I cannot be delivered from him," answered
e: "for in spite of me he rideth with me; and would
Heaven you would put him from me, or now slay him,
r he hath slain two knights at the river passage yonder,
d done many marvellous deeds through pure mischance."
marvel," said the Black Knight, "that any man of wor-
ip will fight with him." "They know him not," said
e damsel, "and think, because he rideth with me, that he
well born." "Truly, he hath a goodly person, and is
kely to be a strong man," replied the knight; "but since
is no man of worship, he shall leave his horse and armour
ith me, for it were a shame for me to do him more harm."
When Sir Beaumains heard him speak thus, he said,
Horse or armour getteth thou none of me, Sir Knight, save
ou winnest them with thy hands; therefore defend thy-
lf, and let me see what thou canst
." "How sayest thou?" answered
e Black Knight. "Now quit this
ly also, for it beseemeth not a kitchen
ave like thee to ride with such a
ly." "I am of higher lineage than
ou," said Sir Beaumains, "and will
aightway prove it on thy body."
hen furiously they drove their horses

at each other, and came together as it had been thunc
But the Black Knight's spear brake short, and Sir Be
mains thrust him through the side, and his spear breakin
the head, left its point sticking fast in the Black Knig
body. Yet did the Black Knight draw his sword, and sm
at Sir Beaumains with many fierce and bitter blows;
after they had fought an hour and more, he fell do
from his horse in a swoon, and forthwith died. Then
Beaumains lighted down and armed himself in the Bl
Knight's armour, and rode on after the damsel. But n
withstanding all his valour, still she scoffed at him, a
said, "Away! for thou savourest ever of the kitchen. A
that such a knave should by mishap destroy so gooc
knight; yet once again I counsel thee to flee, for hard
is a knight who shall repay thee!" "It may chance tha
am beaten or slain," answered Sir Beaumains, "but I w
thee, fair damsel, that I will not flee away, nor leave
company, or my quest, for all that ye can say."

Anon, as they rode, they saw a knight come swiftly
wards them, dressed all in green, who, calling to the dam
said, "Is that my brother, the Black Knight, that ye h
brought with you?" "Nay, and alas!" said she, "
kitchen knave hath slain thy brother through mischanc
"Alas!" said the Green Knight, "that such a noble knigh
he was should be slain by a knave's hand. Traitor!" cried
to Sir Beaumains, "thou shalt die for this! Sir Pereard
my brother, and a full noble knight." "I defy thee," s
Sir Beaumains, "for I slew him knightly and not sha
fully." Then the Green Knight rode to a thorn wher
hung a green horn, and, when he blew three notes, th
came three damsels forth, who quickly armed him,
brought him a great horse and a green shield and sp
Then did they run at one another with their fullest mi
and break their spears asunder; and, drawing their swo

hey closed in fight, and sorely smote and wounded each ther with many grievous blows.

At last, Sir Beaumains' horse jostled against the Green Knight's horse, and overthrew him. Then both alighted, nd, hurtling together like mad lions, fought a great while n foot. But the damsel cheered the Green Knight, and said, My lord, why wilt thou let a kitchen knave so long stand up gainst thee?" Hearing these words, he was ashamed, and ave Sir Beaumains such a mighty stroke as clave his shield sunder. When Sir Beaumains heard the damsel's words, nd felt that blow, he waxed passing wroth, and gave the reen Knight such a buffet on the helm that he fell on his nees, and with another blow Sir Beaumains threw him on ie ground. Then the Green Knight yielded, and prayed im to spare his life. "All thy prayers are vain," said he, nless this damsel who came with me pray for thee." That will I never do, base kitchen knave," said she. "Then all he die," said Beaumains. "Alas! fair lady," said the reen Knight, "suffer me not to die for a word! O Sir night," cried he to Beaumains, "give me my life, and I ill ever do thee homage; and thirty knights, who owe me rvice, shall give allegiance to thee." "All availeth not," swered Sir Beaumains, "unless the damsel ask me for thy e"; and thereupon he made as though he would have in him. Then cried the damsel, "Slay him not; for if ou do thou shalt repent it." "Damsel," said Sir Beaumains, "at thy command, he shall obtain his life. Arise, Knight of the green armour, I release thee!" Then the reen Knight knelt at his feet, and did him homage with words. "Lodge with me this night," said he, "and to-rrow will I guide ye through the forest." So, taking ir horses, they rode to his castle, which was hard by.

Yet still did the damsel rebuke and scoff at Sir Beaumains, and would not suffer him to sit at her table. "I

marvel," said the Green Knight to her, "that ye thus chide so noble a knight, for truly I know none to match him; and be sure, that whatsoever he appeareth now, he will prove, at the end, of noble blood and royal lineage." But of all this would the damsel take no he and ceased not to mock at Sir Beaumains. On the morro they arose and heard mass; and when they had broken th fast, took their horses and rode on their way, the Gre Knight conveying them through the forest. Then, when had led them for a while, he said to Sir Beaumains, "M lord, my thirty knights and I shall always be at thy co mand whensoever thou shalt send for us." "It is w said," replied he; "and when I call upon you, you sh yield yourself and all your knights unto King Arthu "That will we gladly do," said the Green Knight, and departed.

And the damsel rode on before Sir Beaumains, and s to him, "Why dost thou follow me, thou kitchen boy? counsel thee to throw aside thy spear and shield, and betimes, for wert thou as mighty as Sir Lancelot or

Tristram, thou shouldst not pass a valley near this place, called the Pass Perilous." "Damsel," answered he, "let him that feareth flee; as for me, it were indeed a shameful thing to turn after so long a journey." As he spake, they came upon a tower as white as snow, with mighty battlements, and double moats round it, and over the tower-gate hung fifty shields of divers colours. Before the tower walls, they saw a fair meadow, wherein were many knights and squires in pavilions, for on the morrow there was a tournament at that castle.

Then the lord of the castle, seeing a knight armed at all points, with a damsel and a page, riding towards the tower, came forth to meet them; and his horse and harness, with his shield and spear, were all of a red colour. When he came near Sir Beaumains, and saw his armour all of black, he thought him his own brother, the Black Knight, and so cried aloud, "Brother! what do ye here, within these borders?" "Nay!" said the damsel, "it is not thy brother, but a kitchen knave of Arthur's court, who hath slain thy brother, and overcome thy other brother also, the Green

Knight." "Now do I defy thee!" cried the Red Knig to Sir Beaumains, and put his spear in rest and spurred h horse. Then both knights turned back a little space, an ran together with all their might, till their horses fell to th earth. Then, with their swords, they fought fiercely fo the space of three hours. And at last, Sir Beaumains ove came his foe, and smote him to the ground. Then the Re Knight prayed his mercy, and said, "Slay me not, nob knight, and I will yield to thee with sixty knights that o my bidding." "All avails not," answered Sir Beaumain "save this damsel pray me to release thee." Then did h lift his sword to slay him; but the damsel cried alou "Slay him not, Beaumains, for he is a noble knight." The Sir Beaumains bade him rise up and thank the damse which straightway he did, and afterwards invited them his castle, and made them goodly cheer.

But notwithstanding all Sir Beaumains' mighty deed the damsel ceased not to revile and chide him, at which th Red Knight marvelled much; and caused his sixty knigh to watch Sir Beaumains, that no villainy might happen him. And on the morrow, they heard mass and broke the fast, and the Red Knight came before Sir Beaumains, wi his sixty knights, and proffered him homage and fealty. thank thee," answered he; "and when I call upon thee tho shalt come before my lord King Arthur at his court, an yield yourselves to him." "That will we surely do," sa the Red Knight. So Sir Beaumains and the damsel d parted.

And as she constantly reviled him and tormented him, h said to her, "Damsel, ye are discourteous thus always rebuke me, for I have done you service; and for all yo threats of knights that shall destroy me, all they who con lie in the dust before me. Now, therefore, I pray you r buke me no more till you see me beaten or a recreant, an

hen bid me go from you." "There shall soon meet thee
knight who shall repay thee all thy deeds, thou boaster,"
nswered she, "for, save King Arthur, he is the man of
nost worship in the world." "It will be the greater
onour to encounter him," said Sir Beaumains.

Soon after, they saw before them a city passing fair, and
etween them and the city was a meadow newly mown,
herein were many goodly tents. "See thou yonder blue
avilion?" said the damsel to Sir Beaumains; "it is Sir
erseant's, the lord of that great city, whose custom is, in
ll fair weather, to lie in this meadow, and joust with his
nights."

And as she spake, Sir Perseant, who had espied them
oming, sent a messenger to meet Sir Beaumains, and to
sk him if he came in war or peace. "Say to thy lord," he
nswered, "that I care not whether of the twain it be." So
hen the messenger gave this reply, Sir Perseant came
ut to fight with Sir Beaumains. And making ready, they
ode their steeds against each other; and when their spears
ere shivered asunder, they fought with their swords.
nd for more than two hours did they hack and hew at
ach other, till their shields and hauberks were all dinted
ith many blows, and they themselves were sorely wounded.
nd at the last, Sir Beaumains smote Sir Perseant on
e helm, so that he fell grovelling on the earth. And
hen he unlaced his helm to slay him, the damsel prayed
r his life. "That will I grant gladly," answered Sir
eaumains, "for it were pity such a noble knight should
e." "Grammercy!" said Sir Perseant, "for now I cer-
inly know that it was thou who slewest my brother, the
lack Knight, Sir Pereard; and overcame my brothers,
e Green Knight, Sir Pertolope, and the Red Knight,
r Perimones; and since thou hast overcome me also,
will do thee homage and fealty, and place at thy

command one hundred knights to do thy bidding

But when the damsel saw Sir Perseant overthrown, sh marvelled greatly at the might of Sir Beaumains, and sai "What manner of man may ye be, for now am I sure th ye be come of noble blood? And truly, never did woma revile knight as I have done thee, and yet ye have ever cou teously borne with me, which surely never had been we ye not of gentle blood and lineage."

"Lady," replied Sir Beaumains, "a knight is little wort who may not bear with a damsel; and so whatsoever y said to me I took no heed, save only that at times when you scorn angered me, it made me all the stronger against tho with whom I fought, and thus have ye furthered me in m battles. But whether I be born of gentle blood or no, have done you gentle service, and peradventure will c better still, ere I depart from you."

"Alas!" said she, weeping at his courtesy, "forgive m fair Sir Beaumains, all that I have missaid and misdon against you." "With all my heart," said he; "and sin you now speak fairly to me, I am passing glad of heart, an methinks I have the strength to overcome whatever knigh I shall henceforth encounter."

Then Sir Perseant prayed them to come to his pavilio and set before them wines and spices, and made them gre cheer. So they rested that night; and on the morrow, th damsel and Sir Beaumains rose, and heard mass. An when they had broken their fast, they took their leave Sir Perseant. "Fair damsel," said he, "whither lead ye th knight?" "Sir," answered she, "to the Castle Dangerou where my sister is besieged by the Knight of the Redlands "I know him well," said Sir Perseant, "for the most per ous knight alive—a man without mercy, and with t strength of seven men. God save thee, Sir Beaumain from him! and enable thee to overcome him, for the La

yones, whom he besiegeth, is as fair a lady as there liveth
n this world." "Thou sayest truth, sir," said the damsel;
for I am her sister; and men call me Linet, or the Wild
Maiden." "Now, I would have thee know," said Sir Per-
eant to Sir Beaumains, "that the Knight of the Redlands
ath kept that siege more than two years, and prolongeth
ne time hoping that Sir Lancelot, or Sir Tristram, or Sir
amoracke, may come and battle with him; for these three
nights divide between them all knighthood; and thou if
ou mayest match the Knight of the Redlands, shalt well
e called the fourth knight of the world." "Sir," said Sir
eaumains, "I would fain have that good fame; and truly,
am come of great and honourable lineage. And so that
ou and this fair damsel will conceal it, I will tell ye my
escent." And when they swore to keep it secret, he told
em, "My name is Sir Gareth of Orkney, my father was
ing Lot, and my mother the Lady Belisent, King Arthur's
ster. Sir Gawain, Sir Agravain, and Sir Gaheris, are my
ethren, and I am the youngest of them all. But, as yet
ing Arthur and the court know me not, who I am."
hen he had thus told them, they both wondered greatly.
And the damsel Linet sent the dwarf forward to her
ster, to tell her of their coming. Then did Dame Lyones
quire what manner of man the knight was who was com-
g to her rescue. And the dwarf told her of all Sir Beau-
ains' deeds by the way: how he had overthrown Sir Key,
d left him for dead; how he had battled with Sir Lance-
t, and was knighted by him; how he had fought with, and
in, the thieves; how he had overcome the two knights
no kept the river passage; how he had fought with, and
in, the Black Knight; and how he had overcome the
een Knight, the Red Knight, and last of all, the Blue
night, Sir Perseant. Then was Dame Lyones passing
ad, and sent the dwarf back to Sir Beaumains with great

gifts, thanking him for his courtesy, in taking such a labou on him for her sake, and praying him to be of good hea and courage. And as the dwarf returned, he met th Knight of the Redlands, who asked him whence he cam "I came here with the sister of my lady of the castle," sai the dwarf, "who hath been now to King Arthur's court an brought a knight with her to take her battle on him. "Then is her travail lost," replied the knight; "for, thoug she had brought Sir Lancelot, Sir Tristram, Sir Lamorack or Sir Gawain, I count myself their equal, and who beside

shall be so called?" The the dwarf told the knigh what deeds Sir Beaumain had done; but he answere "I care not for him, whos ever he be, for I shall shor ly overcome him, and giv him shameful death, as t so many others I hav done."

Then the damsel Lin and Sir Beaumains left S Perseant, and rode through a forest to a large plain, where they saw man pavilions, and hard by, a castle passing fair.

But as they came near Sir Beaumains saw upon th branches of some trees which grew there, the dead bodi of forty knights hanging, with rich armour on them, the shields and swords about their necks, and golden spu upon their heels. "What meaneth this?" said he, amaze "Lose not thy courage, fair sir," replied the damsel, " this shameful sight, for all these knights came hither t rescue my sister; and when the Knight of the Redlands ha overcome them, he put them to this piteous death, witho

ıercy; and in such wise will he treat thee also unless thou earest thee more valiantly than they." "Truly he useth ıameful customs," said Sir Beaumains; "and it is a marvel ıat he hath endured so long."

So they rode onward to the castle walls, and found them ɔuble-moated, and heard the sea waves dashing on one de the walls. Then said the damsel, "See you that ivory ɔrn hanging upon the sycamore-tree? The Knight of e Redlands hath hung it there, that any knight may blow ereon, and then will he himself come out and fight with m. But I pray thee sound it not till high noontide, for w it is but daybreak, and till noon his strength increases the might of seven men." "Let that be as it may, fair msel," answered he, "for were he stronger knight than er lived, I would not fail him. Either will I defeat him his mightiest, or die knightly in the field." With that spurred his horse unto the sycamore, and blew the ivory rn so eagerly, that all the castle rang its echoes. Intly, all the knights who were in the pavilions ran forth, l those within the castle looked out from the windows, or ɔve the walls. And the Knight of the Redlands, arming nself quickly in blood-red armor, with spear, and shield, l horse's trappings of like colour, rode forth into a little ley by the castle walls, so that all in the castle, and at the ge, might see the battle.

Be of good cheer," said the damsel Linet to Sir Beauins, "for thy deadly enemy now cometh; and at yonder dow is my lady and sister, Dame Lyones." "In good h," said Sir Beaumains, "she is the fairest lady I have r seen, and I would wish no better quarrel than to fight her." With that, he looked up to the window, and saw Lady Lyones, who waved her handkerchief to her r and to him to cheer them. Then called the Knight he Redlands to Sir Beaumains, "Leave now thy gaz-

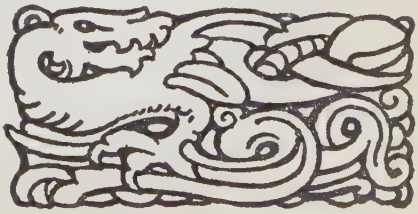
ing, Sir Knight, and turn
me, for I warn thee th
lady is mine." "She love
none of thy fellowship,"
answered; "but know th
that I love her, and w
rescue her from thee,
die." "Say ye so!" sa
the Red Knight. "Ta
ye no warning from th
knights that hang on yo
der trees?" "For shar
that thou so boastest!" said Sir Beaumains. "Be sure th
sight hath raised a hatred for thee that will not lightly
put out, and given me not fear, but rage." "Sir Knig
defend thyself," said the Knight of the Redlands, "for
will talk no longer."

Then did they put their spears in rest, and came togeth
at the fullest speed of their horses, and smote each oth
in the midst of their shields, so that their horses' harn
sundered by the shock, and they fell to the ground. A
both lay there so long time, stunned, that many deem
their necks were broken. And all men said the stran
knight was a strong man, and a noble jouster, for none h
ever yet so matched the Knight of the Redlands. Th
in a while, they rose, and putting up their shields befo
them, drew their swords, and fought with fury, running
each other like wild beasts—now striking such buffets th
both reeled backwards, now hewing at each other till th
shore the harness off in pieces, and left their bodies nak
and unarmed. And thus they fought till noon was p
when, for a time, they rested to get breath, so sorely st
gering and bleeding, that many who beheld them wept
pity. Then they renewed the battle—sometimes rushing

uriously together, that both fell to the ground, and anon anging swords in their confusion. Thus they endured, nd lashed, and struggled, until eventide, and none who w knew which was the likeliest to win; for though the night of the Redlands was a wily and subtle warrior, his btlety made Sir Beaumains wilier and wiser too. So ce again they rested for a little space, and took their helms f to find breath.

But when Sir Beaumains' helm was off, he looked up to ame Lyones, where she leaned, gazing and weeping, from r window. And when he saw the sweetness of her smil-g, all his heart was light and joyful, and starting up, he de the Knight of the Redlands make ready. Then did ey lace their helms and fight together yet afresh, as ough they had never fought before. And at the last, the ight of the Redlands with a sudden stroke smote Sir aumains on the hand, so that his sword fell from it, and th' a second stroke upon the helm he drove him to the th. Then cried aloud the damsel Linet, "Alas! Sir aumains, see how my sister weepeth to behold thee den!" And when Sir Beaumains heard her words, he ang upon his feet with strength, and leaping to his ord, he caught it; and with many heavy blows pressed so ely on the Knight of the Redlands, that in the end he te his sword from out his hand, and, with a mighty blow n the head, hurled him upon the ground.

Then Sir Beaumains unlaced his helm, and would have ightway slain him, but Knight of the Redlands dded, and prayed for rcy. "I may not spare e," answered he, "be-se of the shameful death ich thou hast given to



so many noble knights." "Yet hold thy hand, Sir Knigh said he, "and hear the cause. I loved once a fair da sel, whose brother was slain, as she told me, by knight of Arthur's court, either Sir Lancelot or Sir G wain; and she prayed me, as I truly loved her, and by faith of my knighthood, to labour daily in deeds of arı till I should meet with him; and to put all knights of Round Table whom I should overcome to a villainc death. And this I swore to her." Then prayed the ea and knights, and barons, who stood round Sir Beaumai to spare the Red Knight's life. "Truly," replied he, am loth to slay him, notwithstanding he hath done su shameful deeds. And inasmuch as what he did was dc to please his lady and to gain her love, I blame him le and for your sakes I will release him. But on this agr ment only shall he hold his life—that straightway he dep into the castle, and yield him to the lady there, and ma her such amends as she shall ask, for all the trespass he h done upon her lands; and afterwards, that he shall go u King Arthur's court, and ask the pardon of Sir Lance and Sir Gawain for all the evil he hath done against ther "All this, Sir Knight, I swear to do," said the Knight of Redlands; and therewith he did him homage and fealt

Then came the damsel Linet to Sir Beaumains and Knight of the Redlands, and disarmed them, and staunc their wounds. And when the Knight of the Redlands h made amends for all his trespasses, he departed for court.

Then Sir Beaumains, being healed of his wounds, arn himself, and took his horse and spear and rode straigh the castle of Dame Lyones, for greatly he desired to her. But when he came to the gate they closed it fast, pulled the drawbridge up. And as he marvelled ther he saw the Lady Lyones standing at a window, who s

ND SO THEY PLIGHTED THEIR TROTH TO EACH OTHER

Go thy way as yet, Sir Beaumains, for thou shalt not holly have my love until thou be among the worthiest nights of all the world. Go therefore, and labour yet in rms for twelve months more, and then return to me." Alas! fair lady," said Sir Beaumains, "I have scarce derved this of thee, for sure I am that I have bought thy ve with all the best blood in my body." "Be not agrieved, fair knight," said she, "for none of thy service forgot or lost. Twelve months will soon be passed in ble deeds; and trust that to my death I shall love thee nd not another." With that she turned and left the win-ow.

So Sir Beaumains rode away from the castle very sorrowl at heart, and rode he knew not whither, and lay that ght in a poor man's cottage. On the morrow he went rward, and came at noon to a broad lake, and thereby he ighted, being very sad and weary, and rested his head on his shield, and told his dwarf to keep watch while slept.

Now, as soon as he had departed, the Lady Lyones rented, and greatly longed to see him back, and asked her ter many times of what lineage he was; but the damsel ould not tell her, being bound by her oath to Sir Beauains, and said his dwarf best knew. So she called Sir ringamors, her brother, who dwelt with her, and prayed m to ride after Sir Beaumains till he found him sleepg, and then to take his dwarf away and bring him back her. Anon Sir Gringamors departed, and rode till he me to Sir Beaumains, and found him as he lay sleeping the water-side. Then stepping stealthily behind the arf he caught him in his arms and rode off in haste. nd though the dwarf cried loudly to his lord for help, d woke Sir Beaumains, yet, though he rode full quickly er him, he could not overtake Sir Gringamors.

When Dame Lyones saw her brother come back, she w passing glad of heart, and forthwith asked the dwarf master's lineage. "He is a king's son," said the dwa "and his mother is King Arthur's sister. His name is Gareth of Orkney, and he is brother to the good knig Sir Gawain. But I pray you suffer me to go back to lord, for truly he will never leave this country till he ha me again." But when the Lady Lyones knew her delive was come of such a kingly stock, she longed more th ever to see him again.

Now as Sir Beaumains rode in vain to rescue his dwa he came to a fair green road and met a poor man of country, and asked him had he seen a knight on a bla horse, riding with a dwarf of a sad countenance behi him. "Yea," said the man, "I met with such a knight hour agone, and his name is Sir Gringamors. He liv at a castle two miles from hence; but he is a perilo knight, and I counsel ye not to follow him save ye b him goodwill." Then Sir Beaumains followed the pa which the poor man showed him, and came to the cas And riding to the gate in great anger, he drew his swo and cried aloud, "Sir Gringamors, thou traitor! deliver my dwarf again, or by my knighthood it shall be ill thee!" Then Sir Gringamors looked out of a window a said, "Sir Gareth of Orkney, leave thy boasting words, thou wilt not get thy dwarf again." But the Lady Lyo said to her brother, "Nay, brother, but I will that he ha his dwarf, for he hath done much for me, and delivered from the Knight of the Redlands, and well do I love h above all other knights." So Sir Gringamors went do to Sir Gareth and cried him mercy, and prayed him alight and take good cheer.

Then he alighted, and his dwarf ran to him. And wh he was in the hall came the Lady Lyones dressed roya

ke a princess. And Sir Gareth was right glad of heart
nen he saw her. Then she told him how she had made
r brother take away his dwarf and bring him back to
r. And then she promised him her love, and faithfully
cleave to him and none other all the days of her life.
nd so they plighted their troth to each other. Then Sir
ingamors prayed him to sojourn at the castle, which
llingly he did. "For," said he, "I have promised to
it the court for twelve months, though sure I am that
the meanwhile I shall be sought and found by my lord
ng Arthur and many others." So he sojourned long
the castle.

Anon the knights, Sir Perseant, Sir Perimones, and Sir
rtolope, whom Sir Gareth had overthrown, went to King
thur's court with all the knights who did them service,
l told the king they had been conquered by a knight of
named Beaumains. And as they yet were talking, it
s told the king there came another great lord with five
ndred knights, who, entering in, did homage, and de-
red himself to be the Knight of the Redlands. "But
true name," said he, "is Ironside, and I am hither sent
one Sir Beaumains, who conquered me, and charged me
ield unto your grace." "Thou art welcome," said King
hur, "for thou hast been long a foe to me and mine,
truly I am much beholden to the knight who sent thee.
l now, Sir Ironside, if thou wilt amend thy life and
l of me, I will entreat thee as a friend, and make thee
ght of the Round Table; but thou mayest no more be
murderer of noble knights." Then the Knight of the
llands knelt to the king, and told him of his promise to
Beaumains to use never more such shameful customs;
how he had so done but at the prayer of a lady whom
oved. Then knelt he to Sir Lancelot and Sir Gawain,
prayed their pardon for the hatred he had borne them.

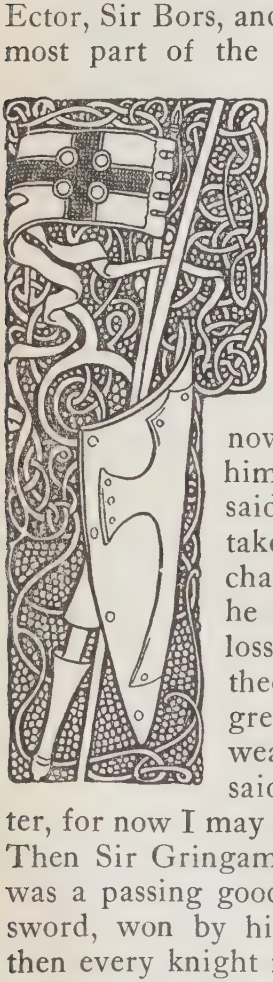
But the king and all the court marvelled greatly v
Sir Beaumains was. "For," said the king, "he is a
noble knight." Then said Sir Lancelot, "Truly he is co
of honourable blood, else had I not given him the orde
knighthood; but he charged me that I should conceal
secret."

Now as they talked thus it was told King Arthur that
sister, the Queen of Orkney, was come to the court w
a great retinue of knights and ladies. Then was there gr
rejoicing, and the king rose and saluted his sister. A
her sons, Sir Gawain, Sir Agravain, and Sir Gaheris, k
before her and asked her blessing, for during fifteen ye
last past they had not seen her. Anon she said, "Where
my youngest son, Sir Gareth? for I know that he was h
a twelvemonth with you, and that ye made a kitchen kn
of him." Then the king and all the knights knew that
Beaumains and Sir Gareth were the same. "Truly," s
the king, "I knew him not." "Nor I," said Sir Gaw
and both his brothers. Then said the king, "God
thanked, fair sister, that he is proved as worshipful a kni
as any now alive, and by the grace of Heaven he shall
found forthwith if he be anywhere within these sev
realms." Then said Sir Gawain and his brethren, "Lo
if ye will give us leave we will go seek him." But
Lancelot said, "It were better that the king should sen
messenger to Dame Lyones and pray her to come hit
with all speed, and she will counsel where ye shall f
him." "It is well said," replied the king; and sent a n
senger quickly unto Dame Lyones.

When she heard the message she promised she wo
come forthwith, and told Sir Gareth what the messen
had said, and asked him what to do. "I pray you," s
he, "tell them not where I am, but when my lord K
Arthur asketh for me, advise him thus—that he proclai

urnament before this castle on Assumption Day, and that
e knight who proveth best shall win yourself and all your
nds." So the Lady Lyones departed and came to King
thur's court, and there was right nobly welcomed. And
nen they asked her where Sir Gareth was, she said she
uld not tell. "But, lord," said she, "with thy goodwill I
ll proclaim a tournament before my castle on the Feast
the Assumption, whereof the prize shall be myself and
my lands. Then if it be proclaimed that you, lord, and
ur knights will be there, I will find knights on my side
fight you and yours, and thus am I sure ye will hear tid-
gs of Sir Gareth." "Be it so done," replied the king.
So Sir Gareth sent messengers privily to Sir Perseant
d Sir Ironside, and charged them to be ready on the day
pointed, with their companies of knights to aid him and
party against the king. And when they were arrived
said, "Now be ye well assured that we shall be matched
th the best knights of the world, and therefore must we
ther all the good knights we can find."
So proclamation was made throughout all England,
ales, Scotland, Ireland, and Cornwall, and in the out
es and other countries, that at the Feast of the Assumption
our Lady, next coming, all knights who came to joust at
stle Perilous should make choice whether they would
e with the king or with the castle. Then came many
od knights on the side of the castle. Sir Epinogris, the
of the King of Northumberland, and Sir Palomedes
Saracen, and Sir Grummore Grummorsum, a good
ght of Scotland, and Sir Brian des Iles, a noble knight,
d Sir Carados of the Tower Dolorous, and Sir Tristram,
o as yet was not a knight of the Round Table, and many
ers. But none among them knew Sir Gareth, for he
k no more upon him than any mean person.
And on King Arthur's side there came the King of Ire-

land and the King of Scotland, the noble prince Sir Ga haut, Sir Gawain and his brothers Sir Agravain and Gaheris, Sir Ewaine, Sir Tor, Sir Perceval, and Sir Lan racke, Sir Lancelot also and his kindred, Sir Lionel, Ector, Sir Bors, and Sir Bedivere, likewise Sir Key and most part of the Table Round. The two queens al



Queen Guinevere and the Queen Orkney, Sir Gareth's mother, ca with the king. So there was a gr array both within and without castle, with all manner of feasting a minstrelsy.

Now before the tournament beg Sir Gareth privily prayed Da Lyones, Sir Gringamors, Sir Ironsi and Sir Perseant, that they would nowise disclose his name, nor make more him than of any common knight. Th said Dame Lyones, "Dear lord, I pray th take this ring, which hath the power change the wearer's clothing into any col he may will, and guardeth him from a loss of blood. But give it me again, I pr thee, when the tournament is done, for greatly increaseth my beauty whensoeve wear it." "Grammercy, mine own lad said Sir Gareth, "I wished for nothing b ter, for now I may be certainly disguised as long as I wi Then Sir Gringamors gave Sir Gareth a bay courser t was a passing good horse, with sure armour, and a no sword, won by his father from a heathen tyrant. A then every knight made him ready for the tournament.

So on the Day of the Assumption, when mass and mat were said, the heralds blew their trumpets and sounded

e tourney. Anon came out the knights of the castle and e knights of King Arthur, and matched themselves to-ther.

Then Sir Epinogris, son of the King of Northumber-nd, a knight of the castle, encountered Sir Ewaine, and th broke off their spears short to their hands. Then came r Palomedes from the castle, and met Sir Gawain, and ey so hardly smote each other, that both knights and rses fell to the earth. Then Sir Tristram, from the stle, encountered with Sir Bedivere, and smote him to e earth, horse and man. Then the Knight of the Red-ds and Sir Gareth met with Sir Bors and Sir Bleoberis; d the Knight of the Redlands and Sir Bors smote to-ther so hard that their spears burst, and their horses fell ovelling to the ground. And Sir Bleoberis brake his ear upon Sir Gareth, but himself was hurled upon the ound. When Sir Galihodin saw that, he bade Sir Gareth ep him, but Sir Gareth lightly smote him to the earth. en Sir Galihud got a spear to avenge his brother, but s served in like manner. And Sir Dinadam, and his ther La-cote-male-taile, and Sir Sagramour le Desirous, d Dodinas le Savage, he bore down all with one spear. When King Anguish of Ireland saw this, he marvelled at that knight could be who seemed at one time green d at another blue; for so at every course he changed colour that none might know him. Then he ran to-rds him and encountered him, and Sir Gareth smote king from his horse, saddle and all. And in like man-he served the King of Scotland, and King Urience of re, and King Bagdemagus.

Then Sir Galahaut, the noble prince, cried out, "Knight the many colours! thou hast jousted well; now make thee dy to joust with me." When Sir Gareth heard him, took a great spear and met him swiftly. And the

prince's spear broke off, but Sir Gareth smote him on the left side of the helm, so that he reeled here and there, and had fallen down had not his men recovered him. "By my faith," said King Arthur, "that knight of the many colours is a good knight. I pray thee, Sir Lancelot du Lake, encounter with him." "Lord," said Sir Lancelot, "by thy leave I will forbear. I find it in my heart to spare him at this time, for he hath done enough work for one day; and when a good knight doth so well it is no knightly part to hinder him from this honour. And peradventure

his quarrel is here to-day, and he may be the best beloved of the Lady Lyones of all that be here; for I see well he paineth and forceth himself to do great deeds. Therefore, as for me, this day he shall have the honour; for though I were able to put him from it, I would not." "You speak well and truly," said the king.

Then after the tilting, they drew swords, and there began a great tournament, and there Sir Lancelot did marvellous deeds of arms, for first he fought with both Sir Tristram and Sir Carados, albeit they were the most perilous in all the world.

Then came Sir Gareth and put them asunder, would not smite a stroke against Sir Lancelot, by him he had been knighted. Anon Sir Gareth's he had need of mending, and he rode aside to see to it and drink water, for he was sore athirst with all his migl feats of strength. And while he drank, his dwarf said him, "Give me your ring, lest ye lose it while ye drin So Sir Gareth took it off. And when he had finished drin ing, he rode back eagerly to the field, and in his ha forgot to take the ring again. Then all the people saw t he wore yellow armour. And King Arthur told a hera "Ride and espy the cognizance of that brave knight, I have asked many who he is, and none can tell me."

Then the herald rode near, and saw written round abo his helmet in letters of gold, "Sir Gareth of Orkney." A instantly the herald cried his name aloud, and all m pressed to see him.

But when he saw he was discovered, he pushed w haste through all the crowd, and cried to his dwarf, "B thou hast beguiled me foully in keeping my ring; give it again, that I may be hidden." And as soon as he had it on, his armour changed again, and no man knew where had gone. Then he passed forth from the field; but Gawain, his brother, rode after him.

And when Sir Gareth had ridden far into the forest, took off his ring, and sent it back by the dwarf to the La Lyones, praying her to be true and faithful to him wh he was away.

Then rode Sir Gareth long through the forest, till ni fell, and coming to a castle he went up to the gate, a prayed the porter to let him in. But churlishly he answe "that he should not lodge there." Then said Sir Gare "Tell thy lord and lady that I am a knight of King Arthu court, and for his sake I pray their shelter." With t

e porter went to the duchess who owned the castle. "Let
m in straightway," cried she; "for the king's sake he shall
t be harbourless!" and went down to receive him. When
r Gareth saw her coming, he saluted her, and said, "Fair
dy, I pray you give me shelter for this night, and if there
here any champion or giant with whom I must needs
ght, spare me till to-morrow, when I and my horse shall
ve rested, for we are full weary." "Sir Knight," she
id, "thou speakest boldly; for the lord of this castle is a
e to King Arthur and his court, and if thou wilt rest
re to-night thou must agree, that wheresoever thou may-
meet my lord, thou must yield to him as a prisoner."
What is thy lord's name, lady?" said Sir Gareth. "The
uke de la Rowse," said she. "I will promise thee," said
, "to yield to him, if he promise to do me no harm; but if
refuse, I will release myself with my sword and spear."
"It is well," said the duchess; and commanded the draw-
idge to be let down. So he rode into the hall and
ghted. And when he had taken off his armour, the duch-
and her ladies made him passing good cheer. And
er supper his bed was made in the hall, and there he
ted that night. On the morrow he rose and heard mass,
l having broken his fast, took his leave and departed.
And as he rode past a certain mountain there met him
night named Sir Bendelaine, and cried unto him, "Thou
lt not pass unless thou joust with me or be my prisoner!"
hen will we joust," replied Sir Gareth. So they let
ir horses run at full speed, and Sir Gareth smote Sir
ndelaine through his body so sorely that he scarcely
ched his castle ere he fell dead. And as Sir Gareth
ssently came by the castle, Sir Bendelaine's knights and
vants rode out to revenge their lord. And twenty of
m fell on him at once, although his spear was broken.
drawing his sword he put his shield before him. And

though they brake their spears upon him, one and all, a sorely pressed on him, yet ever he defended himself li a noble knight. Anon, finding they could not overcor him, they agreed to slay his horse; and having killed with their spears, they set upon Sir Gareth as he fought foot. But every one he struck he slew, and drave at the with fearful blows, till he had slain them all but four, w fled. Then taking the horse of one of those that lay the dead, he rode upon his way.

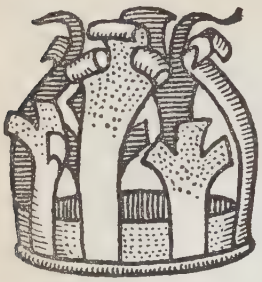
Anon he came to another castle and heard from within sound as of many women moaning and weeping. Th said he to a page who stood without, "What noise is th I hear?" "Sir Knight," said he, "there be within thir ladies, the widows of thirty knights who have been slain the lord of this castle. He is called the Brown Knig without pity, and is the most perilous knight living, wher fore I warn thee to flee." "That will I never do," said S Gareth, "for I fear him not." Then the page saw t Brown Knight coming and said to Gareth, "Lo! my lo is near."

So both knights made them ready and galloped the horses towards each other, and the Brown Knight bra his spear upon Sir Gareth's shield; but Sir Gareth smo him through the body so that he fell dead. At that rode into the castle and told the ladies he had slain the foe. Then were they right glad of heart and made h all the cheer they could, and thanked him out of measu But on the morrow as he went to mass he found the lad weeping in the chapel upon divers tombs that we there. And he knew that in those tombs their husban lay. Then he bade them be comforted, and with nob and high words he desired and prayed them all to be Arthur's court on the next Feast of Pentecost.

So he departed and rode past a mountain where was

odly knight waiting, who said to him, "Abide, Sir Knight, d joust with me!" "How are ye named?" said Sir Gar-h. "I am the Duke de la Rowse," answered he. "In od sooth," then said Sir Gareth, "not long ago I lodged thin your castle, and there promised I would yield to u whenever we might meet." "Art thou that proud ight," said the duke, "who was ready to fight with me? uard thyself therefore and make ready." So they ran gether, and Sir Gareth smote the duke from his horse. nen they alighted and drew their swords, and fought full rely for the space of an hour; and at the last Sir Gareth ote the duke to the earth and would have slain him, but yielded. "Then must ye go," said Sir Gareth, "to my rd King Arthur at the next Feast of Pentecost and say at I, Sir Gareth, sent ye." "As ye will be it," said the ke, and gave him up his shield for pledge.

And as Sir Gareth rode alone he saw an armed knight ming towards him. And putting the duke's shield be-re him he rode fast to tilt with him; and so they ran to-ther as it had been thunder, and brake their spears upon ch other. Then fought they fiercely with their swords, d lashed together with ch mighty strokes that od ran to the ground on ery side. And after they d fought together for o hours and more, it anced the damsel Linet ssed that way; and when saw them she cried out, ir Gawain and Sir Gar-, leave your fighting, ye are brethren!" At t they threw away their



shields and swords, and took each oth in their arms, and wept a great wh ere they could speak. And each ga to the other the honour of the batt and there was many a kind word b tween them. Then said Sir Gawa "O my brother, for your sake I ha had great sorrow and labour! B truly I would honour you though were not my brother, for ye have done great worship King Arthur and his court, and sent more knights to h than any of the Table Round, except Sir Lancelot."

Then the damsel Linet staunched their wounds, and th horses being weary she rode her palfrey to King Arth and told him of this strange adventure. When she h told her tidings, the king himself mounted his horse a bade all come with him to meet them. So a great compa of lords and ladies went forth to meet the brothers. A when King Arthur saw them he would have spoken hea words, but for gladness he could not. And both Sir G wain and Sir Gareth fell down at their uncle's knees a did him homage, and there was passing great joy and gla ness among them all.

Then said the king to the damsel Linet, "Why com not the Lady Lyones to visit her knight, Sir Gareth, w hath had such travail for her love?" "She knoweth n my lord, that he is here," replied the damsel, "for tr she desireth greatly to see him." "Go ye and bring h hither," said the king. So the damsel rode to tell h sister where Sir Gareth was, and when she heard it s rejoiced full heartily and came with all the speed she cou And when Sir Gareth saw her, there was great joy a comfort between them.

Then the king asked Sir Gareth whether he would ha

at lady for his wife? "My lord," replied Sir Gareth, now well that I love her above all ladies living." "Now, r lady," said King Arthur, "what say ye?" "Most noble ng," she answered, "my lord, Sir Gareth, is my first love d shall be my last, and if I may not have him for my sband I will have none." Then said the king to them, e well assured that for my crown I would not be the use of parting your two hearts."

Then was high preparation made for the marriage, for king desired it should be at the Michaelmas next follow-g, at Kinkenadon-by-the-Sea.

So Sir Gareth sent out messages to all the knights whom had overcome in battle that they should be there upon marriage-day.

Therefore, at the next Michaelmas, came a goodly com-ny to Kinkenadon-by-the-Sea. And there did the Arch-hop of Canterbury marry Sir Gareth and the Lady ones with all solemnity. And all the knights whom Sir reth had overcome were at the feast; and every manner revels and games was held with music and minstrelsy. d there was a great jousting for three days. But be-use of his bride the king would not suffer Sir Gareth to st. Then did King Arthur give great lands and fair, h store of gold, to Sir Gareth and his wife, that so they ght live royally together to their lives' end.

CHAPTER XI

THE ADVENTURES OF SIR TRISTRAM OF LYONESSE

AGAIN King Arthur held high festival at Caerlec at Pentecost, and gathered round him all the fe lowship of the Round Table, and so, according his custom, sat and waited till some adventure should ari or some knight return to court whose deeds and perils mig be told.

Anon he saw Sir Lancelot and a crowd of knights co ing through the doors and leading in their midst the migh knight, Sir Tristram. As soon as King Arthur saw him, rose up and went through half the hall, and held out bo his hands and cried, "Right welcome to thee, good S Tristram, as welcome art thou as any knight that ev came before into this court. A long time have I wished t thee amongst my fellowship." Then all the knights a barons rose up with one accord and came around, and cri out, "Welcome." Queen Guinevere came also, and ma ladies with her, and all with one voice said the same.

Then the king took Sir Tristram by the hand and l him to the Round Table and said, "Welcome again for o of the best and gentlest knights in all the world; a chief war, a chief in peace, a chief in field and forest, a chief

e ladies' chamber—right heartily welcome to this court, ıd mayest thou long abide in it."

When he had so said he looked at every empty seat until : came to what had been Sir Marhaus', and there he found ritten in gold letters, "This is the seat of the noble knight, r Tristram." Whereat they made him, with great cheer d gladness, a fellow of the Round Table.

Now the story of Sir Tristram was as follows:—

There was a king of Lyonesse, named Meliodas, married the sister of King Mark of Cornwall, a right fair lady d a good. And so it happened that King Meliodas hunt- g in the woods was taken by enchantment and made pris- er in a castle. When his wife Elizabeth heard it she was gh mad with grief, and ran into the forest to seek out r lord. But after many days of wandering and sorrow e found no trace of him, and laid her down in a deep lley and prayed to meet her death. And so indeed she l, but ere she died she gave birth in the midst of all her rrow to a child, a boy, and called him with her latest eath Tristram; for she said, "His name shall show how lly he hath come into this world."

Therewith she gave up her ghost, and the gentlewoman ıo was with her took the child and wrapped it from the ld as well as she was able, and lay down with it in her ns beneath the shadow of a tree hard by, expecting death come to her in turn.

But shortly after came a company of lords and barons king for the queen, and found the lady and the child l took them home. And on the next day came King eliodas, whom Merlin had delivered, and when he heard the queen's death his sorrow was greater than tongue ı tell. And anon he buried her solemnly and nobly, and led the child Tristram as she had desired.

Then for seven years King Meliodas mourned and took

no comfort, and all that time young Tristram was w
nourished; but in a while he wedded with the daughter
Howell, King of Brittany, who, that her own childr
might enjoy the kingdom, cast about in her mind how s
might destroy Tristram. So on a certain day she put p
son in a silver cup, where Tristram and her children we
together playing, that when he was athirst he might dri
of it and die. But so it happened that her own son s
the cup, and, thinking it must hold good drink, he climb
and took it, and drank deeply of it, and suddenly thereaf
burst and fell down dead.

When the queen heard that, her grief was very great, b
her anger and envy were fiercer than before, and so
again she put more poison in the cup. And by chance o
day her husband finding it when thirsty, took it up a
was about to drink therefrom, when, seeing him, she spra
up with a mighty cry and dashed it from his hands.

At that King Meliodas, wondering greatly, called
mind the sudden death of his young child, and taking h
fiercely by the hand he cried:

"Traitress, tell me what drink is in this cup or I w
slay thee in a moment"; and therewith pulling out
sword he swore by a great oath to slay her if she straig
way told him not the truth.

"Ah, mercy, lord," said she, and fell down at his fe
"mercy, and I will tell thee all."

And then she told him of her plot to murder Tristra
that her own sons might enjoy the kingdom.

"The law shall judge thee," said the king.

And so anon she was tried before the barons, and co
demned to be burnt to death.

But when the fire was made, and she brought out, ca
Tristram kneeling at his father's feet and besought of h
a favour.

"Whatsoever thou desirest I will give thee," said the ng.

"Give me the life, then, of the queen, my stepmother," id he.

"Thou doest wrong to ask it," said Meliodas; "for she ould have slain thee with her poisons if she could, and iefly for thy sake she ought to die."

"Sir," said he, "as for that, I beseech thee of thy mercy forgive it her, and for my part may God pardon her as do; and so I pray thee grant me my boon, and for God's ke hold thee to thy promise."

"If it must be so," said the king, "take thou her life, for thee I give it, and go and do with her as thou wilt."

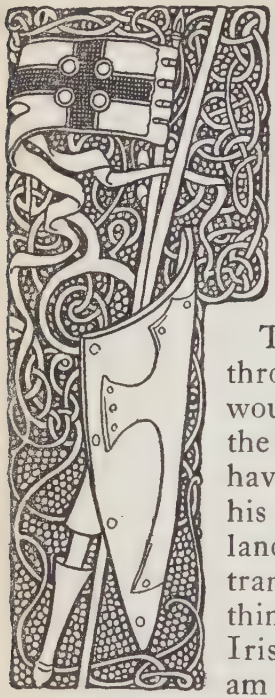
Then went young Tristram to the fire and loosed the een from all her bonds and delivered her from death.

And after a great while by his good means the king ain forgave and lived in peace with her, though never re in the same lodgings.

Anon was Tristram sent abroad to France in care of e named Governale. And there for seven years he rned the language of the land, and all knightly exer- es and gentle crafts, and especially was he foremost in sic and in hunting, and was a harper beyond all others. d when at nineteen years of age he came back to his her, he was as lusty and strong of body and as noble of rt as ever man was seen.

Now shortly after his return it befell that King Anguish Ireland sent to King Mark of Cornwall for the tribute to Ireland, but which was now seven years behindhand. whom King Mark sent answer, if he would have it he st send and fight for it, and they would find a champion ight against it.

o King Anguish called for Sir Marhaus, his wife's ther, a good knight of the Round Table, who lived



then at his court, and sent him wit knightly retinue in six great ships Cornwall. And, casting anchor the castle of Tintagil, he sent up da to King Mark for the tribute or champion. But no knight there wo venture to assail him, for his fame v very high in all the realm for streng and hardihood.

Then made King Mark a proclamat throughout Cornwall, that if any kni would fight Sir Marhaus he should stand the king's right hand for evermore, a have great honour and riches all the rest his days. Anon this news came to land of Lyonesse, and when young T tram heard it he was angry and ashamed think no knight of Cornwall durst assail Irish champion. "Alas," said he, "tha am not a knight, that I might ma this Marhaus! I pray you give me leave, sir, to depart King Mark's court and beg him of his grace to make knight."

"Be ruled by thy own courage," said his father.

So Tristram rode away forthwith to Tintagil to K Mark, and went up boldly to him and said, "Sir, give the order of knighthood and I will fight to the utterm with Sir Marhaus of Ireland."

"What are ye, and whence come ye?" said the king, s ing he was but a young man, though strong and well ma both in body and limb.

"My name is Tristram," said he, "and I was born the country of Lyonesse."

"But know ye," said the king, "this Irish knight v

HOW SIR TRISTRAM RODE AWAY TO TINTAGIL

ght with none who be not come of royal blood and near
kin to kings or queens, as he himself is, for his sister is
e Queen of Ireland."

Then said Tristram, "Let him know that I am come both
n my father's and my mother's side of blood as good as
is, for my father is King Meliodas and my mother was
at Queen Elizabeth, thy sister, who died in the forest at
y birth."

When King Mark heard that he welcomed him with all
s heart, and knighted him forthwith, and made him ready
go forth as soon as he would choose, and armed him
yally in armour covered with gold and silver.

Then he sent Sir Marhaus word, "That a better man
an he should fight with him, Sir Tristram of Lyonesse,
n of King Meliodas and of King Mark's own sister."
the battle was ordained to be fought in an island near
r Marhaus' ships, and there Sir Tristram landed on the
orrow, with Governale alone attending him for squire,
d him he sent back to the land when he had made him-
lf ready.

When Sir Marhaus and Sir Tristram were thus left
ne, Sir Marhaus said, "Young knight Sir Tristram,
at doest thou here? I am full sorry for thy rashness,
ofttimes have I been assailed in vain, and by the best
ights of the world. Be warned in time, return to them
t sent thee."

'Fair knight, and well-proved knight," replied Sir
istram, "be sure that I shall never quit this quarrel till
e of us be overcome. For this cause have I been made
ght, and thou shalt know before we part that though as
unproved, I am a king's son and first-born of a queen.
oreover, I have promised to deliver Cornwall from this
ient burden, or to die. Also, thou shouldst have known,
Marhaus, that thy valour and thy might are but the bet-

ter reasons why I should assail thee; for whether I win
lose I shall gain honour to have met so great a knight
thou art."

Then they began the battle, and tilted at their harde
against each other, so that both knights and horses fell
the earth. But Sir Marhaus' spear smote Sir Tristram
great wound in the side. Then, springing up from the
horses, they lashed together with their swords like two wi
boars. And when they had stricken together a great whi
they left off strokes and lunged at one another's breasts ar
visors; but seeing this availed not they hurtled togeth
again to bear each other down.

Thus fought they more than half the day, till both we
sorely spent and blood ran from them to the ground
every side. But by this time Sir Tristram remain
fresher than Sir Marhaus and better winded, and with
mighty stroke he smote him such a buffet as cut throug
his helm into his brain-pan, and there his sword stuck
so fast that thrice Sir Tristram pulled ere he could get
from his head. Then fell Sir Marhaus down upon h
knees, and the edge of Sir Tristram's sword broke off in
his brain-pan. And suddenly when he seemed dead, S
Marhaus rose and threw his sword and shield away fro
him and ran and fled into his ship. And Tristram cri
out after him, "Aha, Sir Knight of the Round Table, do
thou withdraw thee from so young a knight? It is a shan
to thee and all thy kin; I would rather have been hewn in
a hundred pieces than have fled from thee."

But Sir Marhaus answered nothing, and sorely groa
ing fled away.

"Farewell, Sir Knight, farewell," laughed Tristra
whose own voice now was hoarse and faint with loss
blood; "I have thy sword and shield in my safe kee
ing, and will wear them in all places where I ride on m

ventures, and before King Arthur and the Table ound."

Then was Sir Marhaus taken back to Ireland by his mpany; and as soon as he arrived his wounds were arched, and when they searched his head they found erein a piece of Tristram's sword; but all the skill of rgeons was in vain to move it out. So anon Sir Marus died.

But the queen, his sister, took the piece of sword-blade d put it safely by, for e thought that some y it might help her revenge her brother's ath.

Meanwhile, Sir Tristm, being sorely wounded, sat down softly on a le mound and bled ssing fast; and in that ll case was found anon Governale and King rk's knights. Then they gently took him up and ught him in a barge back to the land, and lifted him a bed within the castle, and had his wounds dressed efully.

But for a great while he lay sorely sick, and was likely have died of the first stroke Sir Marhaus had given n with the spear, for the point of it was poisoned. And, ugh the wisest surgeons and leeches—both men and men—came from every part, yet could he be by no ns cured. At last came a wise lady, and said plainly t Sir Tristram never should be healed, until he went stayed in that same country whence the poison came. en this was understood, the king sent Sir Tristram in

a fair and goodly ship to Ireland, and by fortune he a
rived fast by a castle where the king and queen were. An
as the ship was being anchored, he sat upon his bed an
harped a merry lay, and made so sweet a music as w
never equalled.

When the king heard that the sweet harper was
wounded knight, he sent for him, and asked his name. '
am of the country of Lyonesse," he answered, "and my nam
is Tramtrist"; for he dared not tell his true name lest th
vengeance of the queen should fall upon him for her broth
er's death.

"Well," said King Anguish, "thou are right welcom
here, and shalt have all the help this land can give the
but be not anxious if I am at times cast down and sa
for but lately in Cornwall the best knight in the worl
fighting for my cause, was slain; his name was Sir Ma
haus, a knight of King Arthur's Round Table." And the
he told Sir Tristram all the story of Sir Marhaus' battl
and Sir Tristram made pretence of great surprise an
sorrow, though he knew all far better than the king himsel

Then was he put in charge of the king's daughter, I
Belle Isault, to be healed of his wound, and she was as fa
and noble a lady as men's eyes might see. And so marve
lously was she skilled in medicine, that in a few days sh
fully cured him; and in return Sir Tristram taught her th
harp; so, before long, they two began to love each oth
greatly.

But at that time a heathen knight, Sir Palomedes, w
in Ireland, and much cherished by the king and quee
He also loved mightily La Belle Isault, and never weari
of making her great gifts, and seeking for her favour, an
was ready even to be christened for her sake. Sir Tristra
therefore hated him out of measure, and Sir Palomed
was full of rage and envy against Tristram.

LA BELLE ISAULT

ND HIS KNIGHTS

And so it befell that
ng Anguish proclaimed
great tournament to be
d, the prize whereof
uld be a lady called the
dy of the Launds, of
r kindred to the king:
her the winner of the
rnament should wed in
ee days afterwards, and
sess all her lands.
en La Belle Isault told
Tristram of this tournament, he said, "Fair lady! I am
a feeble knight, and but for thee had been a dead man
: what wouldst thou I should do? Thou knowest
I may not joust."

Ah, Tristram," said she, "why wilt thou not fight in
tournament? Sir Palomedes will be there, and will
his mightiest; and therefore be thou there, I pray thee,
lse he will be winner of the prize."

Madam," said Tristram, "I will go, and for thy sake
do my best; but let me go unknown to all men; and
thou, I pray thee, keep my counsel, and help me to a
uise."

o on the day of jousting came Sir Palomedes, with a
k shield, and overthrew many knights. And all the
ple wondered at his prowess; for on the first day he put
he worse Sir Gawain, Sir Gaheris, Sir Agravaine, Sir
, and many more from far and near. And on the mor-
he was conqueror again, and overthrew the King with a
ndred Knights and the King of Scotland. But presently
Tristram rode up to the lists, having been let out at a
y postern of the castle, where none could see. La Belle
lt had dressed him in white armour and given him a

white horse and shield, and so he came suddenly into
field as it had been a bright angel.

As soon as Sir Palomedes saw him he ran at him wit
great spear in rest, but Sir Tristram was ready, and at
first encounter hurled him to the ground. Then th
arose a great cry that the knight with the black shield
overthrown. And Sir Palomedes sorely hurt and sham
sought out a secret way and would have left the field;
Tristram watched him, and rode after him, and bade h
stay, for he had not yet done with him. Then did
Palomedes turn with fury, and lash at Sir Tristram w
his sword; but at the first stroke Sir Tristram smote h
to the earth, and cried, "Do now all my commands, or t
thy death." Then he yielded to Sir Tristram's mercy, a
promised to forsake La Belle Isault, and for twelve mon
to wear no arms or armour. And rising up, he cut
armour off him into shreds with rage and madness, a
turned and left the field: and Sir Tristram also left
lists, and rode back to the castle through the postern g

Then was Sir Tristram long cherished by the King a
Queen of Ireland, and ever with La Belle Isault.
on a certain day, while he was bathing, came the queen w
La Belle Isault by chance into his chamber, and saw
sword lie naked on the bed: anon she drew it from
scabbard and looked at it a long while, and both thou
it a passing fair sword; but within a foot and a half
the end there was a great piece broken out, and while
queen was looking at the gap, she suddenly remembe
the piece of sword-blade that was found in the brain-pan
her brother Sir Marhaus.

Therewith she turned and cried, "By my faith, thi
the felon knight who slew thy uncle!" And running
her chamber she sought in her casket for the piece of i
from Sir Marhaus' head and brought it back, and fi

Tristram's sword; and surely did it fit therein as closely
t had been but yesterday broke out.
Then the queen caught the sword up fiercely in her hand,
ran into the room where Sir Tristram was yet in his
, and making straight for him, had run him through
body, had not his squire, Sir Hebes, got her in his
s, and pulled the sword away from her.
Then ran she to the king, and fell upon her knees be-
him, saying, "Lord and husband, thou hast here in
house that felon knight who slew my brother Mar-
s!"
Who is it?" said the king.
It is Sir Tristram!" said she, "whom Isault hath
led."
Alas!" replied the king, "I am full grieved thereat,
he is a good knight as ever I have seen in any field; but
arge thee leave thou him, and let me deal with him."
hen the king went to Sir Tristram's chamber and
nd him all armed and ready to mount his horse, and
to him, "Sir Tristram, it is not to prove me against
I come, for it were shameful of thy host to seek thy
Depart in peace, but tell me first thy name, and
ther thou slewest my brother, Sir Marhaus."
hen Sir Tristram told him all the truth, and how he
hid his name, to be unknown in Ireland; and when
ad ended, the king declared he held him in no blame.
wbeit, I cannot for mine honour's sake retain thee at
court, for so I should displease my barons, and my wife,
all her kin."
Sir," said Sir Tristram, "I thank thee for the goodness
hast shown me here, and for the great goodness my
, thy daughter, hath shown me; and it may chance to
nore for thy advantage if I live than if I die; for where-
er I may be, I shall ever seek thy service, and shall be

my lady thy daughter's servant in all places, and her kni
in right and wrong, and shall never fail to do for her
much as knight can do."

Then Sir Tristram went to La Belle Isault, and took
leave of her. "O gentle knight," said she, "full of g
am I at your departing, for never yet I saw a man to l
so well."

"Madam," said he, "I promise faithfully that all my
I shall be your knight."

Then Sir Tristram gave her a ring, and she gave h
another, and after that he left her, weeping and lamenti
and went among the barons, and openly took his leave
them all, saying, "Fair lords, it so befalleth that I n
must depart hence; therefore, if there be any here who
have offended or who is grieved with me, let him now
it, and before I go I will amend it to the utmost of
power. And if there be but one who would speak sha
of me behind my back, let him say it now or never,
here is my body to prove it on—body against body."

And all stood still and said no word, though some th
were of the queen's kindred who would have assailed h
had they dared.

So Sir Tristram departed from Ireland and took the
and came with a fair wind to Tintagil. And when
news came to King Mark that Sir Tristram was return
healed of his wound, he was passing glad, and so were
his barons. And when he had visited the king his un
he rode to his father, King Meliodas, and there had all
heartiest welcome that could be made him. And both
king and queen gave largely to him of their lands
goods.

Anon he came again to King Mark's court, and th
lived in great joy and pleasure, till within a while the k
grew jealous of his fame, and of the love and favour sho

PARTING OF SIR TRISTRAM AND LA BELLE ISAULT

n by all damsels. And as long as King Mark lived, he
er after loved Sir Tristram, though there was much fair
ech between them.

Then it befell upon a certain day that the good knight
Bleoberis de Ganis, brother to Sir Blamor de Ganis,
l nigh cousin to Sir Lancelot of the Lake, came to King
rk's court and asked of him a favour. And though the
g marvelled, seeing he was a man of great renown,
a knight of the Round Table, he granted him all his
ing. Then said Sir Bleoberis, "I will have the fairest
y in your court, at my own choosing."

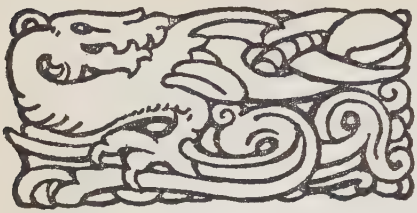
I may not say thee nay," replied the king; "choose,
efore, but take all the issues of thy choice."

o when he had looked around, he chose the wife of
l Segwarides, and took her by the hand, and set her
n horseback behind his squire, and rode forth on his
.

resently thereafter came in the earl, and rode out
ightway after him in rage. But all the ladies cried out
ne upon Sir Tristram that he had not gone, and one
iked him foully and called him coward knight, that
would stand and see a lady forced away from his uncle's
rt. But Sir Tristram answered her, "Fair lady, it is
my place to take part in this quarrel while her lord
husband is here to do it. Had he not been at this
rt, peradventure I had been her champion. And if it
efall that he speed ill, then may it happen that I speak
n that foul knight before he pass out of this realm."

non ran in one of Sir Segwarides' squires, and told that
master was sore wounded, and at the point of death.
en Sir Tristram heard that, he was soon armed and on
horse, and Governale, his servant, followed him with
dd and spear.

nd as he rode, he met his cousin Sir Andret, who had



been commanded by K
Mark to bring home
him two knights of K
Arthur's court who roar
the country thereabo
seeking adventures.

"What tidings?" s
Sir Tristram.

"God help me, never worse," replied his cousin; "
those I went to bring have beaten and defeated me, and
my message at naught."

"Fair cousin," said Sir Tristram, "ride ye on your w
perchance if I should meet them ye may be revenged."

So Sir Andret rode into Cornwall, but Sir Tristram r
after the two knights who had misused him, namely
Sagramour le Desirous, and Sir Dodinas le Savage. A
before long he saw them but a little way before him.

"Sir," said Governale, "by my advice thou wilt le
them alone, for they be two well-proved knights of Arth
court."

"Shall I not therefore rather meet them?" said Sir T
tram, and, riding swiftly after them, he called to them
stop, and asked them whence they came, and whither t
were going, and what they were doing in those march

Sir Sagramour looking haughtily at Sir Tristram,
made mocking of his words, and said, "Fair knight,
ye a knight of Cornwall?"

"Wherefore askest thou that?" said Tristram.

"Truly, because it is full seldom seen," replied Sir Sag
mour, "that Cornish knights are valiant with their arm
with their tongues. It is but two hours since there
us such a Cornish knight, who spoke great words w
might and prowess, but anon, with little mastery, he
laid on earth, as I trow wilt thou be also."

Fair lords," said Sir Tristram, "it may chance I be a
er man than he; but, be that as it may, he was my
sin, and for his sake I will assail ye both; one Cornish
ght against ye two."

When Sir Dodinas le Savage heard this speech, he
ght at his spear and said, "Sir Knight, keep well thy-
"; and then they parted and came together as it had
thunder, and Sir Dodinas' spear split asunder; but
Tristram smote him with so full a stroke as hurled
over his horse's crupper, and nearly brake his neck.
Sagramour, seeing his fellow's fall, marvelled who
new knight might be, and dressed his spear, and came
inst Sir Tristram as a whirlwind; but Sir Tristram
te him a mighty buffet, and rolled him with his horse
n on the ground; and in the falling he brake his thigh.
hen, looking at them both as they lay grovelling on the
s, Sir Tristram said, "Fair knights, will ye joust any
e? Are there no bigger knights in King Arthur's
t? Will ye soon again speak shame of Cornish
hts?"

Thou hast defeated us, in truth," replied Sir Sagra-
r, "and on the faith of knighthood I require thee tell
ny right name?"

'e charge me by a great thing," said Sir Tristram, "and
ll answer ye."

id when they heard his name the two knights were
glad that they had met Sir Tristram, for his deeds
known through all the
, and they prayed him
bide in their company.
Nay," said he, "I must
a fellow-knight of
s, Sir Bleoberis de
s, whom I seek."

"God speed you well," said the two knights; and
Tristram rode away.

Soon he saw before him in a valley Sir Bleoberis w
Sir Segwarides' wife riding behind his squire upon a
frey. At that he cried out aloud, "Abide, Sir Knight
King Arthur's court. Bring back again that lady or deli
her to me."

"I will not," said Bleoberis, "for I dread no Corn
knight."

"Why," said Sir Tristram, "may not a Cornish kni
do well as any other? This day, but three miles back,
knights of thy own court met me, and found one Corn
knight enough for both before we parted."

"What were their names?" said Sir Bleoberis.

"Sir Sagramour le Desirous and Sir Dodinas le Savag
said Sir Tristram.

"Ah," said Sir Bleoberis, amazed; "hast thou then
with them? By my faith, they were two good knights
men of worship, and if thou hast beat both thou must ne
be a good knight; but for all that thou shalt beat me
ere thou hast this lady."

"Defend thee, then," cried out Sir Tristram, and ca
upon him swiftly with his spear in rest. But Sir Bl
beris was as swift as he, and each bore down the oth
horse and all, on to the earth.

Then they sprang clear of their horses, and lashed
gether full eagerly and mightily with their swords, t
ing and traversing on the right hand and on the
more than two hours, and sometimes rushing toget
with such fury that they both lay grovelling on
ground. At last Sir Bleoberis started back and s
"Now, gentle knight, hold hard awhile, and let us sp
together."

"Say on," said Sir Tristram, "and I will answer the

Sir," said Sir Bleoberis, "I would know thy name, and
rt, and country."
I have no shame to tell them," said Sir Tristram. "I
King Meliodas' son, and my mother was sister to King
rk, from whose court I now come. My name is Sir
stram de Lyonesse."
Truly," said Sir Bleoberis, "I am right glad to hear it,
thou art he that slew Sir Marhaus hand-to-hand, fight-
for the Cornish tribute; and overcame Sir Palomedes
he great Irish tournament, where also thou didst over-
w Sir Gawain and his nine companions."
I am that knight," said Sir Tristram, "and now I pray
tell me thy name."
I am Sir Bleoberis de Ganis, cousin of Sir Lancelot of
Lake, one of the best knights in all the world," he an-
ed.
Thou sayest truth," said Sir Tristram; "for Sir Lance-
as all men know, is peerless in courtesy and knight-
l, and for the great love I bear to his name I will not
ingly fight more with thee his kinsman."
n good faith, sir," said Sir Bleoberis, "I am as loth to
thee more; but since thou hast followed me to win
lady, I proffer thee kindness, courtesy, and gentleness;
lady shall be free to go with which of us she pleaseth
"
am content," said Sir Tristram, "for I doubt not she
come to me."
hat shalt thou shortly prove," said he, and called his
e, and set the lady in the midst between them, who
with walked to Sir Bleoberis and elected to abide
him. Which, when Sir Tristram saw, he was in
rous anger with her, and felt that he could scarce
hame return to King Mark's court. But Sir Bleoberis
"Hearken to me, good knight, Sir Tristram, because

King Mark gave me free choice of any gift, and because this lady chose to go with me, I took her; but now I have fulfilled my quest and my adventure, and for thy sake she shall be sent back to her husband at the abbey where he lieth."

So Sir Tristram rode back to Tintagil, and Sir Bleoberis to the abbey where Sir Segwarides lay wounded,

and there delivered up his lady, and departed as a noble knight.

After this adventure Sir Tristram abode still at his uncle's court, till in the envy of his heart King Mark devised a plan to be rid of him. So on a certain day he desired him to depart again for Ireland, and there

demand La Belle Isault on his behalf, to be his queen—
ever had Sir Tristram praised her beauty and her goodn
till King Mark desired to wed her for himself. M
over, he believed his nephew surely would be slain by
queen's kindred if he once were found again in Irelan

But Sir Tristram, scorning fear, made ready to dep
and took with him the noblest knights that could be fou
arrayed in the richest fashion.

And when they were come to Ireland, upon a certain
Sir Tristram gave his uncle's message, and King Angu
consented thereto.

But when La Belle Isault was told the tidings she
very sorrowful and loth—yet made she ready to set fo
with Sir Tristram, and took with her Dame Bragwa
her chief gentlewoman. Then the queen gave Dame Br
waine, and Governale, Sir Tristram's servant, a little fl
and charged them that La Belle Isault and King M
should both drink of it on their marriage day, and t
should they surely love each other all their lives.

Anon Sir Tristram and Isault, with a great compa
took the sea and departed. And so it chanced that
day sitting in their cabin they were athirst, and saw a li
flask of gold which seemed to hold good wine. So
Tristram took it up, and said, "Fair lady, this looketh
be the best of wines, and your maid, Dame Bragwaine,
my servant, Governale, have kept it for themselv
Thereat they both laughed merrily, and drank each a
other from the flask, and never before had they tasted
wine which seemed so good and sweet. But by the t
they had finished drinking they loved each other so v
that their love nevermore might leave them for weal or w
And thus it came to pass that though Sir Tristram mi
never wed La Belle Isault, he did the mightiest deed
arms for her sake only all his life.

hen they sailed onwards till they came to a castle called ere, where they would have rested. But anon there forth a great company and took them prisoners. And n they were in prison, Sir Tristram asked a knight lady whom they found therein wherefore they were so nefully dealt with; "for," said he, "it was never the om of any place of honour that I ever came unto to e a knight and lady asking shelter and thrust them into on, and a full evil and discourteous custom is it."

Sir," said the knight, "know ye not that this is called Castle Pluere, or the weeping castle, and that it is an ient custom here that whatsoever knight abideth in it t needs fight the lord of it, Sir Brewnor, and he that is weakest shall lose his head. And if the lady he hath n him be less fair than the lord's wife, she shall lose her d; but if she be fairer, then must the lady of the castle her head."

Now Heaven help me," said Sir Tristram, "but this foul and shameful custom. Yet have I one advantage, my lady is the fairest that doth live in all the world, hat I nothing fear for her; and as for me, I will full lly fight for my own head fair field."

hen said the knight, ok ye be up betimes to- row, and make you ly and your lady."

nd on the morrow came Brewnor to Sir Tris- n, and put him and Is- forth out of prison, and ght him a horse and ar- r, and bade him make y, for all the commons

and estates of that lordship waited in the field to see judge the battle.

Then Sir Brewnor, holding his lady by the hand, muffled, came forth, and Sir Tristram went to meet with La Belle Isault beside him, muffled also. Then Sir Brewnor, "Sir Knight, if thy lady be fairer than m with thy sword smite off my lady's head; but if my l be fairer than thine, with my sword I will smite thy lady's head. And if I overcome thee thy lady sh be mine, and thou shalt lose thy head."

"Sir Knight," replied Sir Tristram, "this is a right f and felon custom, and rather than my lady shall lose head will I lose my own."

"Nay," said Sir Brewnor, "but the ladies shall be r compared together and judgment shall be had."

"I consent not," cried Sir Tristram, "for who is h that will give rightful judgment? Yet doubt not that lady is far fairer than thine own, and that will I prove make good." Therewith Sir Tristram lifted up the from off La Belle Isault, and stood beside her with naked sword drawn in his hand.

Then Sir Brewnor unmuffled his lady and did in manner. But when he saw La Belle Isault he knew t none could be so fair, and all there present gave their ju ment so. Then said Sir Tristram, "Because thou and lady have long used this evil custom, and have slain m good knights and ladies, it were a just thing to destroy t both."

"In good sooth," said Sir Brewnor, "thy lady is fai than mine, and of all women I never saw any so f Therefore, slay my lady if thou wilt, and I doubt not bu shall slay thee and have thine."

"Thou shalt win her," said Sir Tristram, "as dearly ever knight won lady; and because of thy own judgm

d of the evil custom that thy lady hath consented to, I ll slay her as thou sayest."

And therewithal Sir Tristram went to him and took his ly from him, and smote off her head at a stroke.

"Now take thy horse," cried out Sir Brewnor, "for since ave lost my lady I will win thine and have thy life."

So they took their horses and came together as fast as ey could fly, and Sir Tristram lightly smote Sir Brewnor m his horse. But he rose right quickly, and when Sir istram came again he thrust his horse through both the oulders, so that it reeled and fell. But Sir Tristram s light and nimble, and voided his horse, and rose up d dressed his shield before him, though meanwhile, ere could draw out his sword, Sir Brewnor gave him three four grievous strokes. Then they rushed furiously to- her like two wild boars, and fought hurtling and hewing e and there for nigh two hours, and wounded each er full sorely. Then at the last Sir Brewnor rushed n Sir Tristram and took him in his arms to throw him, he trusted greatly in his strength. But Sir Tristram at that time called the strongest and biggest knight of world; for he was bigger than Sir Lancelot, though Sir celot was better breathed. So anon he thrust Sir Brew- grovelling to the earth, and then unlaced his helm and ck off his head. Then all they that belonged to the le came and did him homage and fealty, and prayed to abide there for a season and put an end to that foul om.

ut within a while he departed and came to Cornwall, there King Mark was forthwith wedded to La Belle lt with great joy and splendour.

nd Sir Tristram had high honour, and ever lodged at king's court. But for all he had done him such services g Mark hated him, and on a certain day he set two

knights to fall upon him
he rode in the forest. B
Sir Tristram lightly smo
one's head off, and sore
wounded the other, a
made him bear his fellow
body to the king. At th
the king dissembled a
hid from Sir Tristram th
the knights were sent
him; yet more than ev
he hated him in secret, a
sought to slay him.

So on a certain day, by the assent of Sir Andret, a fa
knight, and forty other knights, Sir Tristram was tak
prisoner in his sleep and carried to a chapel on the roc
above the sea to be cast down. But as they were about
cast him in, suddenly he brake his bonds asunder, and rus
ing at Sir Andret, took his sword and smote him dow
therewith. Then, leaping down the rocks where no
could follow, he escaped them. But one shot after h
and wounded him full sorely with a poisoned arrow in t
arm.

Anon his servant Governale, with Sir Lambegus, soug
him and found him safe among the rocks, and told h
that King Mark had banished him and all his followers
avenge Sir Andret's death. So they took ship and came
Brittany.

Now Sir Tristram, suffering great anguish from
wound, was told to seek Isoude, the daughter of the King
Brittany, for she alone could cure such wounds. Whe
fore he went to King Howell's court, and said, "Lord, I
come into this country to have help from thy daughter,
men tell me none but she may help me." And Isou

dly offering to do her best, within a month he was de whole.

While he abode still at the court, an earl named Grip de war upon King Howell, and besieged him; and Sir y Hedius, the king's son, went forth against him, but s beaten in battle and sore wounded. Then the king aying Sir Tristram for his help, he took with him such ghts as he could find, and on the morrow, in another ttle, did such deeds of arms that all the land spake of him. r there he slew the earl with his own hands, and more n a hundred knights besides.

When he came back King Howell met him, and saluted n with every honour and rejoicing that could be thought and took him in his arms, and said, "Sir Tristram, all kingdom will I resign to thee."

"Nay," answered he, "God forbid, for truly am I beden to you forever for your daughter's sake."

Then the king prayed him to take Isoude in marriage, h a great dower of lands and castles. To this Sir Tris-n presently consenting they were wedded at the court.

But within a while Sir istram greatly longed to Cornwall, and Sir Kay dius desired to go with n. So they took ship; as soon as they were at the wind blew them on the coast of North les, nigh to Castle Per-is, hard by a forest erein were many strange entures ofttimes to be . Then said Sir Tris-m to Sir Kay Hedius,

"Let us prove some of them ere we depart." So they to their horses and rode forth.

When they had ridden a mile or more, Sir Tristr spied a goodly knight before him well armed, who by a clear fountain with a strong horse near him, tied an oak-tree. "Fair sir," said he, when they came ne "ye seem to be a knight errant by your arms and harne therefore make ready now to joust with one of us, both."

Thereat the knight spake not, but took his shield a buckled it round his neck, and leaping on his horse caug a spear from his squire's hand.

Then said Sir Kay Hedius to Sir Tristram, "Let assay him."

"Do thy best," said he.

So the two knights met, and Sir Kay Hedius fell sor wounded in the breast.

"Thou hast well jousted," cried Sir Tristram to t knight; "now make ready for me!"

"I am ready," answered he, and encountered him, a smote him so heavily that he fell down from his hor Whereat, being ashamed, he put his shield before him, a drew his sword, crying to the strange knight to do likewi Then they fought on foot for well-nigh two hours, till th were both weary.

At last Sir Tristram said, "In all my life I never n a knight so strong and well-breathed as ye be. It were pity we should further hurt each other. Hold thy han fair knight, and tell me thy name."

"That will I," answered he, "if thou wilt tell me thin

"My name," said he, "is Sir Tristram of Lyonesse."

"And mine, Sir Lamoracke of Gaul."

Then both cried out together, "Well met"; and Sir L moracke said, "Sir, for your great renown, I will that

ve all the worship of this battle, and therefore will I ld me unto you." And therewith he took his sword by point to yield him.

'Nay," said Sir Tristram, "ye shall not do so, for well know ye do it of courtesy, and not of dread." And rewith he offered his sword to Sir Lamoracke, saying, ir, as an overcome knight, I yield me unto you as unto man of noblest powers I have ever met with."

'Hold," said Sir Lamoracke, "let us now swear together rermore to fight against each other."

Then did they swear as he said.

Then Sir Tristram returned to Sir Kay Hedius, and en he was whole of his wounds, they departed together a ship, and landed on the coast of Cornwall. And when y came ashore, Sir Tristram eagerly sought news of Belle Isault. And one told him in mistake that she was d. Whereat, for sore and grievous sorrow, he fell vn in a swoon, and so lay for three days and nights.

When he awoke therefrom he was crazed, and ran into forest and abode there like a wild man many days; ereby he waxed lean and weak of body, and would have l, but that a hermit laid some meat beside him as he slept. w in that forest was a giant named Tauleas, who, for of Tristram, had hid himself within a castle, but when told him he was mad, came forth and went at large n. And on a certain day he saw a knight of Cornwall, ed Sir Dinaunt, pass by with a lady, and when he had hted by a well to rest, the giant leaped out from his ush, and took him by the throat to slay him. But Sir tram, as he wandered through the forest, came upon n as they struggled; and when the knight cried out for , he rushed upon the giant, and taking up Sir Dinaunt's rd, struck off therewith the giant's head, and straight- disappeared among the trees.

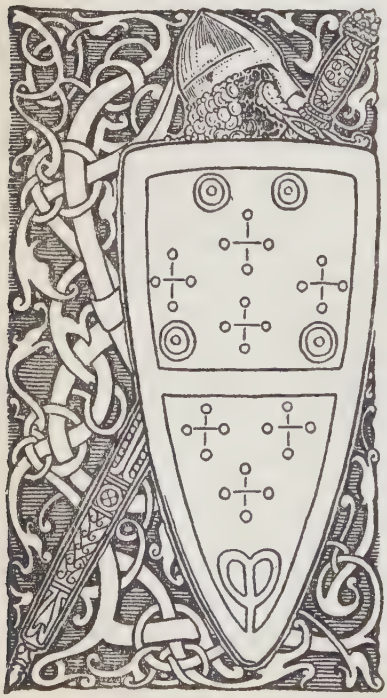
Anon Sir Dinaunt took the head of Tauleas, and ba it with him to the court of King Mark, whither he w bound, and told his adventures. "Where had ye this a venture?" said King Mark.

"At a fair fountain in thy forest," answered he.

"I would fain see that wild man," said the king.

So within a day or two he commanded his knights to great hunting in the forest. And when the king came the well, he saw a wild man lying there asleep, having sword beside him; but he knew not that it was Sir Tristra Then he blew his horn, and summoned all his knights take him gently up and bear him to the court.

And when they came thereto they bathed and wash him, and brought him somewhat to his right mind. No



La Belle Isault knew not th Sir Tristram was in Cor wall; but when she hea that a wild man had be found in the forest, she car to see him. And so sore was he changed, she kne him not. "Yet," said she Dame Bragwaine, "in goo faith I seem to have behe him ofttimes before."

As she thus spoke a litt hound, which Sir Tristra had given her when she fi came to Cornwall, and whi was ever with her, saw S Tristram lying there a leapt upon him, licking l hands and face, and whin and barked for joy.

'Alas," cried out La Belle Isault, "it is my own true ight, Sir Tristram."

And at her voice Sir Tristram's senses wholly came again, l well-nigh he wept for joy to see his lady living.

But never would the hound depart from Tristram; and en King Mark and other knights came up to see him, at upon his body and bayed at all who came too near. en one of the knights said, "Surely this is Sir Tristram; ee it by the hound."

Nay," said the king, "it cannot be," and asked Sir Tris- m on his faith who he was.

My name," said he, "is Sir Tristram of Lyonesse, and v ye may do what ye list with me."

hen the king said, "It repents me that ye are recovered," sought to make his barons slay him. But most of them uld not assent thereto, and counselled him instead to ish Tristram for ten years again from Cornwall, for re- ning without orders from the king. So he was sworn to art forthwith.

nd as he went towards the ship a knight of King hur, named Sir Dinadan, who sought him, came and , "Fair knight, ere that you pass out of this country, I y you joust with me!"

With a good will," said he.

hen they ran together, and Sir Tristram lightly smote from his horse. Anon he prayed Sir Tristram's leave ear him company, and when he had consented they together to the ship.

hen was Sir Tristram full of bitterness of heart, and to all the knights who took him to the shore, "Greet King Mark and all mine enemies from me, and tell n I will come again when I may. Well am I now arded for slaying Sir Marhaus, and delivering this dom from its bondage, and for the perils wherewithal

I brought La Belle Isault from Ireland to the king, a rescued her at the Castle Pluere, and for the slaying the giant Tauleas, and all the other deeds that I have d for Cornwall and King Mark." Thus angrily and pass bitterly he spake, and went his way.

And after sailing awhile the ship stayed at a landi place upon the coast of Wales; and there Sir Tristram a Sir Dinadan alighted, and on the shore they met t knights, Sir Ector and Sir Bors. And Sir Ector countered with Sir Dinadan and smote him to the grou but Sir Bors would not encounter with Sir Tristr "For," said he, "no Cornish knights are men of worshi Thereat Sir Tristram was full wroth, but presently th met them two more knights, Sir Bleoberis and Sir Dria and Sir Bleoberis proffered to joust with Sir Tristram, v shortly smote him down.

"I had not thought," cried out Sir Bors, "that any C nish knight could do so valiantly."

Then Sir Tristram and Sir Dinadan departed, and r into a forest, and as they rode a damsel met them, v for Sir Lancelot's sake was seeking any noble knights rescue him. For Queen Morgan le Fay, who hated h had ordered thirty men-at-arms to lie in ambush for I as he passed, with the intent to kill him. So the dam prayed them to rescue him.

Then said Sir Tristram, "Bring me to that place, damsel."

But Sir Dinadan cried out, "It is not possible for u meet with thirty knights! I will take no part in suc hardihood, for to match one or two or three knight enough; but to match fifteen I will never assay."

"For shame," replied Sir Tristram, "do but your pa

"That will I not," said he; "wherefore, I pray ye, l me your shield, for it is of Cornwall, and because me

t country are deemed cowards, ye are but little troubled
e ride with knights to joust with."

Nay," said Sir Tristram, "I will never give my shield
for her sake who gave it me; but if thou wilt not stand
me to-day I will surely slay thee; for I ask no more of
e than to fight one knight, and if thy heart will not serve
e that much, thou shalt stand by and look on me and
n."

Would God that I had never met with ye!" cried Sir
adan; "but I promise to look on and do all that I may
ave myself."

non they came to where the thirty knights lay waiting,
Sir Tristram rushed upon them, saying, "Here is one
fights for love of Lancelot!" Then slew he two of
n at the first onset with his spear, and ten more swiftly
r with his sword. At that Sir Dinadan took courage,
assailed the others with him, till they turned and fled.
ut Sir Tristram and Sir Dinadan rode on till nightfall,
meeting with a shepherd, asked him if he knew of any
ing thereabouts.

Truly, fair lords," said he, "there is good lodging in a
e hard by, but it is a custom there that none shall lodge
ein save ye first joust with two knights, and as soon as
e within, ye shall find your match."

That is an evil lodging," said Sir Dinadan; "lodge
re ye will, I will not lodge there."

hame on thee!" said Sir Tristram; "art thou a knight
l?"

nen he required him on his knighthood to go with
and they rode together to the castle. As soon as they
near, two knights came out and ran full speed against
; but both of them they overthrew, and went within
castle, and had noble cheer. Now, when they were
med and ready to take rest, there came to the castle

gate two knights, Sir Palomedes and Sir Gaheris, and desired the custom of the castle.

"I would far rather rest than fight," said Sir Dinadan.

"That may not be," replied Sir Tristram, "for we must needs defend the custom of the castle, seeing we have overcome its lords; therefore, make ready."

"Alas that I ever came into your company," said Sir Dinadan.

So they made ready, and Sir Gaheris encountered Sir Tristram and fell before him; but Sir Palomedes overthrew Sir Dinadan. Then would all

fight on foot save Sir Dinadan, for he was sorely bruised and frighted by his fall. And when Sir Tristram prayed him to fight, "I will not," answered he, "for I was wounded by those thirty knights with whom we fought this morning; and as to you, ye are in truth like one gone mad, and who would cast himself away! There be but two knights in the world so mad, and the other is Sir Lancelot, with whom I once rode forth, who kept me evermore at battling so that for a quarter of a year thereafter I lay in my bed. Heaven defend me again from either of your fellowships!"

"Well," said Sir Tristram, "if it must be, I will fig
them both."

Therewith he drew his sword and assailed Sir Palomed
and Sir Gaheris together; but Sir Palomedes said, "Na
but it is a shame for two to fight with one." So he ba
Sir Gaheris stand by, and he and Sir Tristram fought lo
together; but in the end Sir Tristram drave him backwa
whereat Sir Gaheris and Sir Dinadan with one acco
sundered them. Then Sir Tristram prayed the t
knights to lodge there; but Sir Dinadan departed a
rode away into a priory hard by, and there he lodged th
night.

And on the morrow came Sir Tristram to the priory
find him, and seeing him so weary that he could not ri
he left him, and departed. At that same priory was lodg
Sir Pellinore, who asked Sir Dinadan Sir Tristram's nam
but could not learn it, for Sir Tristram had charged th
he should remain unknown. Then said Sir Pellino
"Since ye will not tell it me, I will ride after him and fi
it myself."

"Beware, Sir Knight," said Sir Dinadan, "ye will repe
it if ye follow him."

But Sir Pellinore straightway mounted and overto
him, and cried to him to joust; whereat Sir Tristram fort
with turned and smote him down, and wounded him fu
sorely in the shoulder.

On the day after, Sir Tristram met a herald, who to
him of a tournament proclaimed between King Carad
of Scotland, and the King of North Wales, to be held
the Maiden's Castle. Now King Carados sought
Lancelot to fight there on his side, and the King of No
Wales sought Sir Tristram. And Sir Tristram purpos
to be there. So as he rode, he met Sir Key, the senesch
and Sir Sagramour, and Sir Key proffered to joust w

n. But he refused, desiring to keep himself unwearied the tourney. Then Sir Key cried, "Sir Knight of Corn-ll, joust with me, or yield as recreant." When Sir istram heard that, he fiercely turned and set his spear in t, and spurred his horse towards him. But when Sir y saw him so madly coming on, he in his turn refused, ereat Sir Tristram called him coward, till for shame he s compelled to meet him. Then Sir Tristram lightly ote him down, and rode away. But Sir Sagramour pur-d him, crying loudly to joust with him also. So Sir istram turned and quickly overthrew him likewise, and arted.

Anon a damsel met him as he rode, and told him of a ght adventurous who did great harm thereby, and yed him for his help. But as he went with her he met Gawain, who knew the damsel for a maiden of Queen rgan le Fay. Knowing, therefore, that she needs must e evil plots against Sir Tristram, Sir Gawain demanded im courteously whither he went.

I know not whither," said he, "save as this damsel lead-me."

Sir," said Sir Gawain, "ye shall not ride with her, for and her lady never yet did good to any"; and, drawing sword, he said to the damsel, "Tell me now straightway what cause thou leadest this knight, or else shalt thou ; for I know of old thy lady's treason."

Mercy, Sir Gawain," cried the damsel, "and I will tell e all." Then she told him that Queen Morgan had ained thirty fair damsels to seek out Sir Lancelot Sir Tristram, and by their wiles persuade them to castle, where she had thirty knights in wait to slay n.

Oh, shame!" cried Sir Gawain, "that ever such foul son should be wrought by a queen, and a king's sister."

Then said he to Sir Tristram, "Sir Knight, if ye will sta with me, we will together prove the malice of these thi knights."

"I will not fail you," answered he, "for but few d since I had to do with thirty knights of that same que and trust we may win honour as lightly now as then."

So they rode together, and when they came to the cas Sir Gawain cried aloud, "Queen Morgan le Fay, send thy knights that we may fight with them."

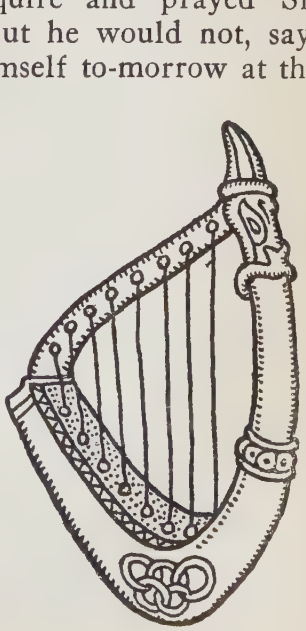
Then the queen urged her knights to issue forth, but t durst not, for they well knew Sir Tristram, and feared h greatly.

So Sir Tristram and Sir Gawain went on their w and as they rode they saw a knight, named Sir Brew without-pity, chasing a lady, with intent to slay h Then Sir Gawain prayed Sir Tristram to hold still and him assail that knight. So he rode up between Brewse and the lady, and cried, "False knight, turn t to me and leave that lady." Then Sir Brewse turned a set his spear in rest, and rushed against Sir Gawain a overthrew him, and rode his horse upon him as he l which when Sir Tristram saw, he cried, "Forbear t villainy," and galloped at him. But when Sir Brewse s by the shield it was Sir Tristram, he turned and fled. A though Sir Tristram followed swiftly after him, yet was so well horsed that he escaped.

Anon Sir Tristram and Sir Gawain came nigh Maiden's Castle, and there an old knight named Pellonnes gave them lodging. And Sir Persides, the of Sir Pellonnes, a good knight, came out to welcome th And, as they stood talking at a bay window of the cas they saw a goodly knight ride by on a black horse, a carrying a black shield. "What knight is that?" as Tristram.

ND HIS KNIGHTS

One of the best knights in all the world," said Sir Per-
es.
Is he Sir Lancelot?" said Sir Tristram.
Nay," answered Sir Persides, "it is Sir Palomedes, who
et unchristened.
Within a while one came and told them that a knight
h a black shield had smitten down thirteen knights.
t us go and see this jousting," said Sir Tristram. So
armed themselves and went down. And when Sir
omedes saw Sir Persides, he sent a squire to him and
ffered him to joust. So they jousted, and Sir Persides
overthrown. Then Sir Tristram made ready to joust,
ere he had his spear in rest, Sir Palomedes took him
dvantage, and struck him on the shield so that he fell.
that Sir Tristram was wroth out of measure and sore
amed, wherefore he sent a squire and prayed Sir
omedes to joust once again. But he would not, say-
"Tell thy master to revenge himself to-morrow at the
iden's Castle, where he shall see
again."



o on the morrow Sir Tristram
manded his servant to give him
lack shield with no cognizance
eon, and he and Sir Persides
into the tournament and
ed King Carados' side.
hen the knights of the King of
th Wales came forth, and there
a great fighting and breaking
pears, and overthrow of men
horses.
ow King Arthur sat above in a
gallery to see the tourney and
the judgment, and Sir Lance-

lot sat beside him. Then came against Sir Tristram a Sir Persides, two knights with them of North Wales, Bleoberis and Sir Gaheris; and Sir Persides was smitt down and nigh slain, for four horsemen rode over hi But Sir Tristram rode against Sir Gaheris and smote h from his horse, and when Sir Bleoberis next encounter him, he overthrew him also. Anon they horsed themsel again, and with them came Sir Dinadan, whom Tristram forthwith smote so sorely, that he reeled off saddle. Then cried he, "Ah! Sir Knight, I know ye bet than ye deem, and promise nevermore to come against y Then rode Sir Bleoberis at him the second time, and h a buffet that felled him to the earth. And soon thereaf the king commanded to cease for that day, and all m marvelled who Sir Tristram was, for the prize of the fi day was given him in the name of the Knight of the Bla Shield.

Now Sir Palomedes was on the side of the King of No Wales, but knew not Sir Tristram again. And, when saw his marvellous deeds, he sent to ask his name. "As that," said Sir Tristram, "he shall not know at this tir but tell him he shall know when I have broken two spe upon him, for I am the knight he smote down yesterd and whatever side he taketh, I will take the other."

So when they told him that Sir Palomedes would be King Carados' side—for he was kindred to King Arthur "Then will I be on the King of Wales' side," said he, "b else would I be on my lord King Arthur's."

Then on the morrow, when King Arthur was come, t herald blew unto the tourney. And King Carados joust with the King of a Hundred Knights and fell before hi and then came in King Arthur's knights and bare ba those of North Wales. But anon Sir Tristram came to them and bare back the battle, and fought so mightily th

e could stand against him, for he smote down on the
ıt and on the left, so that all the knights and common
ple shouted his praise.

Since I bare arms," said King Arthur, "never saw I a
ght do more marvellous deeds."

hen the King of the Hundred Knights and those of
th Wales set upon twenty knights who were of Sir
celot's kin, who fought all together, none failing the
rs. When Sir Tristram beheld their nobleness and
ur, he marvelled much. "Well may he be valiant and
of prowess," said he, "who hath such noble knights
kindred." So, when he had looked on them awhile,
thought it shame to see two hundred men assailing
ıty, and riding to the King of a Hundred Knights, he
, "I pray thee, Sir King, leave your fighting with those
ıty knights, for ye be too many and they be too few.
ye shall gain no honour if ye win, and that I see verily
ill not do unless ye slay them; but if ye will not stay,
ll ride with them and help them."

Nay," said the king, "ye shall not do so; for full gladly
ll do you courtesy," and with that he withdrew his
hts.

ıen Sir Tristram rode his way into the forest, that no
might know him. And King Arthur caused the
ds to blow that the tourney should end that day, and
ave the King of North Wales the prize, because Sir
ram was on his side. And in all the field there was
a cry that the sound thereof was heard two miles
—"The knight with the black shield hath won the
"

las!" said King Arthur, "where is that knight? it
ame to let him thus escape us." Then he comforted
nights, and said, "Be not dismayed, my friends, how-
ye have lost the day; be of good cheer; to-morrow I

myself will be in the field, and fare with you." So th
all rested that night.

And on the morrow the heralds blew unto the field.
the King of North Wales and the King of a Hundr
Knights encountered with King Carados and the King
Ireland, and overthrew them. With that came Ki
Arthur, and did mighty deeds of arms, and overthrew t
King of North Wales and his fellows, and put twen
valiant knights to the worse. Anon came in Sir Palomed
and made great fight upon King Arthur's side. But S
Tristram rode furiously against him, and Sir Palomed
was thrown from his horse. Then cried King Arthu
"Knight of the Black Shield, keep thyself." And as
spake he came upon him, and smote him from his sadd
to the ground, and so passed on to other knights. Th
Sir Palomedes having now another horse rushed at S
Tristram, as he was on foot, thinking to run over hi
But he was aware of him, and stepped aside, and grasp
Sir Palomedes by the arms, and pulled him off his hor
Then they rushed together with their swords, and ma
stood still to gaze on them. And Sir Tristram smote S
Palomedes with three mighty strokes upon the helm, c
ing at each stroke, "Take this for Sir Tristram's sake," a
with that Sir Palomedes fell to the earth.

Anon the King of North Wales brought Sir Tristra
another horse, and Sir Palomedes found one also. Th
did they joust again with passing rage, for both by n
were like mad lions. But Sir Tristram avoided his spe
and seized Sir Palomedes by the neck, and pulled him fr
his saddle, and bore him onward ten spears' length, and
let him fall. Then King Arthur drew forth his sword a
smote the spear asunder, and gave Sir Tristram two
three sore strokes ere he could get at his own sword. I
when he had it in his hand he mightily assailed the ki

THE WILY VIVIEN

h that eleven knights of Lancelot's kin went forth
nst him, but he smote them all down to the earth, so
men marvelled at his deeds.

nd the cry was now so great that Sir Lancelot got a
r in his hand, and came down to assay Sir Tristram,
ng, "Knight with the black shield, make ready."
en Sir Tristram heard him he levelled his spear, and
stooping their heads, they ran together mightily, as
ad been thunder. And Sir Tristram's spear brake
t, but Sir Lancelot struck him with a deep wound in
ide and broke his spear, yet overthrew him not. There-
Sir Tristram, smarting at his wound, drew forth his
d, and rushing at Sir Lancelot, gave him mighty
es upon the helm, so that the sparks flew from it, and
Lancelot stooped his head down to the saddle-bow.
then Sir Tristram turned and left the field, for he felt
vound so grievous that he deemed he should soon die.
n did Sir Lancelot hold the field against all comers,
put the King of North Wales and his party to the
e. And because he was the last knight in the field the
e was given him.

it he refused to take it, and when the cry was raised,
Lancelot hath won the day," he cried out, "Nay, but
Tristram is the victor, for he first began and last en-
l, and so hath he done each day." And all men hon-
l Lancelot more for his knightly words than if he had
the prize.

us was the tournament ended, and King Arthur de-
d to Caerleon, for the Whitsun feast was now nigh
, and all the knights adventurous went their ways.
many sought Sir Tristram in the forest whither he had
and at last Sir Lancelot found him, and brought him
ng Arthur's court, as hath been told already.

CHAPTER XII

THE QUEST OF THE SANGREAL, AND THE ADVENTURES OF SIR PERCIVAL, SIR BORS, AND SIR GALAHAD

AFTER these things, Merlin fell into a dotage of l for a certain damsel of the Lady of the Lake, would let her have no rest, but followed her in ev place. And ever she encouraged him, and made him v come till she had learned all his crafts that she desire know.

Then upon a time she went with him beyond the se the land of Benwicke, and as they went he showed her m wonders, till at length she was afraid, and would fain h been delivered from him.

And as they were in the forest of Broceliande, they together under an oak-tree, and the damsel prayed to all that charm whereby men might be shut up yet aliv rocks or trees. But he refused her a long time, fea to let her know, yet in the end her prayers and kisses o came him, and he told her all. Then did she make great cheer, but anon, as he lay down to sleep, she s rose, and walked about him waving her hands and mu

the charm, and presently enclosed him fast within the
whereby he slept. And therefrom nevermore he could
any means come out for all the crafts that he could do.
d so she departed and left Merlin.

At the vigil of the next Feast of Pentecost, when all the
ghts of the Round Table were met together at Camelot,
had heard mass, and were about to sit down to meat,
re rode into the hall a fair lady on horseback, who went
ight up to King Arthur where he sat upon his throne,
reverently saluted him.

God be with thee, fair damsel," quoth the king; "what
rest thou of me?"

I pray thee tell me, lord," she answered, "where Sir
celot is."

Yonder may ye see him," said King Arthur.

Then went she to Sir Lancelot and said, "Sir, I salute
in King Pelles' name, and require thee to come with
into the forest hereby."

Then asked he her with whom she dwelt, and what she
ied of him.

I dwell with King Pelles," said she, "whom Balin erst
orely wounded when he smote the dolorous stroke. It
who hath sent me to call thee."

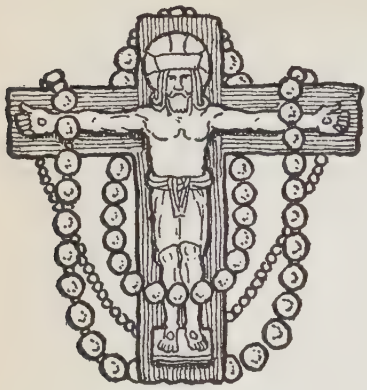
I will go with thee gladly," said Sir Lancelot, and
his squire straightway saddle his horse and bring his
our.

Then came the queen to him and said, "Sir Lancelot, will
eave me thus at this high feast?"

Madam," replied the damsel, "by dinner-time to-
row he shall be with you."

If I thought not," said the queen, "he should not go with
by my goodwill."

Then Sir Lancelot and the lady rode forth till they came
ne forest, and in a valley thereof found an abbey of



nuns, whereby a squire st
ready to open the ga
When they had entered,
descended from their horse
joyful crowd pressed ro
Sir Lancelot and heartily
luted him, and led him ro
to the abbess's chamber,
unarmed him. Anon he
his cousins likewise there,
Bors and Sir Lionel, who
made great joy at seeing h
and said, "By what adventure art thou here, for we thou
to have seen thee at Camelot to-morrow?"

"A damsel brought me here," said he, "but as yet I kn
not for what service."

As they thus talked twelve nuns came in, who brou
with them a youth so passing fair and well made, that
all the world his match could not be found. His name
Galahad, and though he knew him not, nor Lancelot h
Sir Lancelot was his father.

"Sir," said the nuns, "we bring thee here this ch
whom we have nourished from his youth, and pray t
to make him a knight, for from no worthier hand can
receive that order."

Then Sir Lancelot, looking on the youth, saw that
was seemly and demure as a dove, with every feature g
and noble, and thought he never had beheld a better fa
ioned man of his years. "Cometh this desire from h
self?" said he.

"Yea," answered Galahad and all the nuns.

"To-morrow, then, in reverence for the feast, he sh
have his wish," said Sir Lancelot.

And the next day at the hour of prime, he knighted h

said, "God make of thee as good a man as He hath
le thee beautiful."

hen with Sir Lionel and Sir Bors he returned to the
rt, and found all gone to the minster to hear service.
en they came into the banquet-hall each knight and
on found his name written in some seat in letters of
l, as "here ought to sit Sir Lionel," "here ought to sit
Gawain,"—and so forth. And in the Perilous Seat,
he high centre of the table, a name was also written
reat they marvelled greatly, for no living man had ever
dared sit upon that seat, save one, and him a flame
ed forth and drew down under earth, so that he was
more seen.

hen came Sir Lancelot and read the letters in that seat,
said, "My counsel is that this inscription be now
ered up until the knight be come who shall achieve this
t adventure." So they made a veil of silk and put it
the letters.

the meanwhile came Sir Gawain to the court and
the king he had a message to him from beyond the
from Merlin.

For," said he, "as I rode through the forest of Broce-
de but five days since, I heard the voice of Merlin
king to me from the midst of an oak-tree, whereat, in
t amazement, I besought him to come forth. But he,
many groans, replied he never more might do so, for
none could free him, save the damsel of the lake,
had enclosed him there by his own spells which he had
ht her. 'But go,' said he, 'to King Arthur, and tell
that he now prepare his knights and all his Table
nd to seek the Sangreal, for the time is come when
all be achieved.' "

hen Sir Gawain had spoken thus, King Arthur sat
ive in spirit, and mused deeply of the Holy Grale and

what saintly knight should come who might achieve

Anon he bade them hasten to set on the banquet. "S said Sir Key, the seneschal, "if ye go now to meat ye break the ancient custom of your court, for never have dined at this high feast till ye have seen some strange venture."

"Thou sayest truly," said the king, "but my mind full of wonders and musings, till I bethought me not mine old custom."

As they stood speaking thus, a squire ran in and cri "Lord, I bring thee marvellous tidings."

"What be they?" said King Arthur.

"Lord," said he, "hereby at the river is a marvell great stone, which I myself saw swim down hitherwa upon the water, and in it there is set a sword, and ever stone heaveth and swayeth on the water, but floateth do no further with the stream."

"I will go and see it," said the king. So all the knig went with him, and when they came to the river, th surely found they a mighty stone of red marble float on the water, as the squire had said, and therein stuc fair and rich sword, on the pommel whereof were preci stones wrought skilfully with gold into these words: " man shall take me hence but he by whose side I sho hang, and he shall be the best knight in the world."

When the king read this, he turned round to Sir Lan lot, and said, "Fair sir, this sword ought surely to be th for thou art the best knight in all the world."

But Lancelot answered soberly, "Certainly, sir, it is for me; nor will I have the hardihood to set my hand u it. For he that toucheth it and faileth to achieve it sh one day be wounded by it mortally. But I doubt not, lo this day will show the greatest marvels that we yet h seen, for now the time is fully come, as Merlin hath fo

ND HIS KNIGHTS

ned us, when all the
phecies about the San-
l shall be fulfilled."
hen stepped Sir Ga-
n forward and pulled at
sword, but could not
e it, and after him Sir
cival, to keep him fel-
ship in any peril he
ht suffer. But no other
ght durst be so hardy as
y.

Now may ye go to your dinner," said Sir Key, "for
rvellous adventure ye have had."

all returned from the river, and every knight sat
n in his own place, and the high feast and banquet then
sumptuously begun, and all the hall was full of laughter
loud talk and jests, and running to and fro of squires
served their knights, and noise of jollity and mirth.
ien suddenly befell a wondrous thing, for all the doors
windows of the hall shut violently of themselves, and
e thick darkness; and presently there came a fair and
e light from out the Perilous Seat, and filled the
ce with its beams. Then a dead silence fell on
the knights, and each man anxiously beheld his
nbour.

t King Arthur rose and said, "Lords and fair knights,
ye no fear, but rejoice; we have seen strange things
y, but stranger yet remain. For now I know we shall
y see him who may sit in the Siege Perilous, and shall
ve the Sangreal. For as ye all well know, that holy
l, wherefrom at the Supper of our Lord before His
He drank the wine with His disciples, hath been held
since the holiest treasure of the world, and whereso-

ever it hath rested peace and prosperity have rested w
it on the land. But since the dolorous stroke which Ba
gave King Pelles none have seen it, for Heaven, wroth w
that presumptuous blow, hath hid it none know whe
Yet somewhere in the world it still may be, and may b
is left to us, and to this noble order of the Table Round
find and bring it home, and make of this our realm
happiest in the earth. Many great quests and perilous
ventures have ye all taken and achieved, but this high qu
he only shall attain who hath clean hands and a pure he
and valour and hardihood beyond all other men."

While the king spoke there came in softly an old m
robed all in white, leading with him a young knight c
in red from top to toe, but without armour or shield, a
having by his side an empty scabbard.

The old man went up to the king, and said, "Lord, h
I bring thee this young knight of royal lineage, and of
blood of Joseph of Arimathea, by whom the marvels
thy court shall fully be accomplished."

The king was right glad at his words, and said, "Sir,
be right heartily welcome, and the young knight also."

Then the old man put on Sir Galahad (for it was
a crimson robe trimmed w
fine ermine, and took him
the hand and led him to
Perilous Seat, and lifting
the silken cloth which hu
upon it, read these wo
written in gold letters, "T
is the seat of Sir Galahad,
good knight."

"Sir," said the old m
"this place is thine."

Then sat Sir Galahad do

ly and surely, and said to the old man, , ye may now go your way, for ye have e well and truly all ye were com- nded, and commend me to my grandsire, g Pelles, and say that I shall see him ı." So the old man departed with a nue of twenty noble squires.

But all the knights of the Round Table velled at Sir Galahad, and at his tender and at his sitting there so surely in the ilous Seat.

hen the king led Sir Galahad forth from the palace to v him the adventure of the floating stone. "Here," he, "is as great a marvel as I ever saw, and right good hts have tried and failed to gain that sword."

marvel not thereat," said Galahad, "for this adven- is not theirs, but mine; and for the certainty I had eof, I brought no sword with me, as thou mayst see by this empty scabbard."

non he laid his hand upon the sword, and lightly drew om the stone, and put it in his sheath, and said, "This d was that enchanted one which erst belonged to the l knight, Sir Balin, wherewith he slew through piteous ake his brother Balan; who also slew him at the same : all which great woe befell him through the dolorous e he gave my grandsire, King Pelles, the wound reof is not yet whole, nor shall be till I heal him."

s he stood speaking thus, they saw a lady riding swiftly n the river's bank towards them, on a white palfrey; saluting the king and queen, said, "Lord king, Nacien ermit sendeth thee word that to thee shall come to-day greatest honour and worship that hath yet ever befallen ng of Britain; for this day shall the Sangreal appear y house."

With that the damsel took her leave, and departed same way she came.

"Now," said the king, "I know that from to-day the qu of the Sangreal shall begin, and all ye of the Round Ta will be scattered so that nevermore shall I see ye ag together as ye are now; let me then see a joust a tournament amongst ye for the last time before go."

So they all took their harness and met together in meadows by Camelot, and the queen and all her ladies in a tower to see.

Then Sir Galahad, at the prayer of the king and que put on a coat of light armour, and a helmet, but shield would take none, and grasping a lance, he drove into middle of the press of knights, and began to break spe marvellously, so that all men were full of wonder. A in so short a time he had surmounted and exceeded rest, save Sir Lancelot and Sir Percival, that he took chief worship of the field.

Then the king and all the court and fellowship of knig went back to the palace, and so to evensong in the gr minster, a royal and goodly company, and after that down to supper in the hall, every knight in his own seat, they had been before.

Anon suddenly burst overhead the cracking and cryi of great peals of thunder, till the palace walls were shak sorely, and they thought to see them riven all to pieces.

And in the midst of the blast there entered in a su beam, clearer by seven times than ever they saw day, a a marvellous great glory fell upon them all. Then ea knight, looking on his neighbour, found his face fairer th he had ever seen, and so—all standing on their feet—th gazed as dumb men on each other, not knowing what say.

hen entered into the hall the Sangreal, borne aloft with-
hands through the midst of the sunbeam, and covered
white samite, so that none might see it. And all
hall was filled with perfume and incense, and every
ght was fed with the food he best loved. And when the
vessel had been thus borne through the hall, it sud-
y departed, no man saw whither.

When they recovered breath to speak, King Arthur
rose up, and yielded thanks to God and to our Lord.

hen Sir Gawain sprang up and said, "Now have we
been fed by miracle with whatsoever food we thought
r desired; but with our eyes we have not seen the blessed
el whence it came, so carefully and preciously it
concealed. Therefore, I make a vow, that from to-
row I shall labour twelve months and a day in
t of the Sangreal, and longer if need be; nor will I
e again into this court until mine eyes have seen it
ently."

Then he had spoken thus, knight after knight rose up
vowed himself to the same quest, till the most part of
Round Table had thus sworn.

ut when King Arthur heard them all, he could not re-
his eyes from tears, and said, "Sir Gawain, Sir
ain, thou hast set me in great sorrow, for I fear me my
fellowship shall never meet together here again; and
y never Christian king had such a company of worthy
hts around his table at one time."

nd when the queen and her ladies and gentlewomen
d the vows, they had such grief and sorrow as no
ne could tell; and Queen Guinevere cried out, "I mar-
hat my lord will suffer them to depart from him."
many of the ladies who loved knights would have gone
them, but were forbidden by the hermit Nacien, who
this message to all who had sworn themselves to the

quest: "Take with ye no lady nor gentlewoman, for in so high a service as ye go in, no thought but of our Lord an Heaven may enter."

On the morrow morning all the knights rose early, an when they were fully armed, save shields and helms, the went in with the king and queen to service in the minste Then the king counted all who had taken the adventure o themselves, and found them a hundred and fifty knights o the Round Table; and so they all put on their helms, an rode away together in the midst of cries and lamentatio from the court, and from the ladies, and from all th town.

But the queen went alone to her chamber, that no ma might see her sorrow; and Sir Lancelot followed her t say farewell.

When she saw him she cried out, "Oh, Sir Lancelo thou hast betrayed me; thou hast put me to death thus t depart, and leave my lord the king."

"Ah, madam," said he, "be not displeased or angry, fo I shall come again as soon as I can with honour."

"Alas!" said she, "that ever I saw thee; but He th suffered death upon the cross for all mankind be to the safety and good conduct, and to all thy company."

Then Sir Lancelot saluted her and the king, and we forth with the rest, and came with them that night t Castle Vagon, where they abode, and on the morrow the departed from each other on their separate ways, eve knight taking the way that pleased him best.

Now Sir Galahad went forth without a shield, and roc so four days without adventure; and on the fourth da after evensong, he came to an abbey of white monks, whe he was received in the house, and led into a chamber. An there he was unarmed, and met two knights of the Roun Table, King Bagdemagus, and Sir Uwaine.

H, SIR LANCELOT, THOU HAST BETRAYED ME"

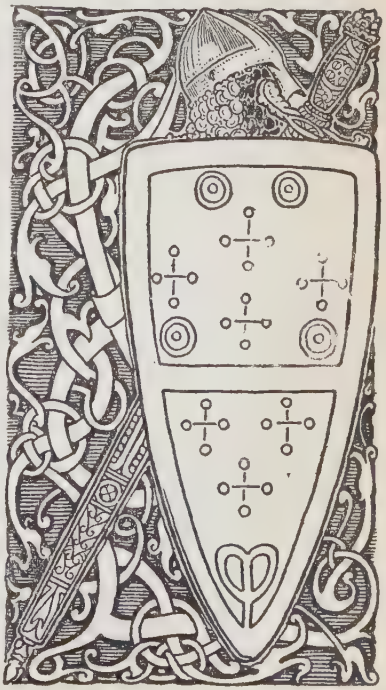
Sirs," said Sir Galahad, "what adventure hath brought
ere?"

Within this place, as we are told," they answered,
ere is a shield no man may bear around his neck with-
receiving sore mischance, or death within three days."

To-morrow," said King Bagdemagus, "I shall attempt
adventure; and if I fail, do thou, Sir Galahad, take
p after me."

I will willingly," said he; "for as ye see I have no shield
et."

o on the morrow they arose and heard mass, and after-
ds King Bagdemagus asked where the shield was kept.
n a monk led him behind the altar, where the shield
g, as white as any snow, and with a blood-red cross in
midst of it.



Sir," said the monk, "this
id should hang from no
ht's neck unless he be the
hiest in the world. I
n ye, therefore, knights;
ider well before ye dare to
h it."

Well," said King Bagde-
us, "I know well that I am
rom the best knight in all
world, yet shall I make the
"; and so he took the
d, and bore it from the
astery.

f it please thee," said he
ir Galahad, "abide here
hou hearest how I speed."

will abide thee," said

Then taking with him a squire who might return w
any tidings to Sir Galahad, the king rode forth; and
fore he had gone two miles, he saw in a fair valley a herm
age, and a knight who came forth dressed in white armo
horse and all, who rode fast against him. When they
countered, Bagdemagus brake his spear upon the Wh
Knight's shield, but was himself struck through
shoulder with a sore wound, and hurled down from
horse. Then the White Knight alighting, came and to
the white shield from the king, and said, "Thou hast do
great folly, for this shield ought never to be borne but
one who hath no living peer." And turning to the squi
he said, "Bear thou this shield to the good knight,
Galahad, and greet him well from me."

"In whose name shall I greet him?" said the squire.

"Take thou no heed of that," he answered; "it is not
thee or any earthly man to know."

"Now tell me, fair sir, at the least," said the squire, "w
may this shield be never borne except its wearer come
injury or death?"

"Because it shall belong to no man save its right
owner, Galahad," replied the knight.

Then the squire went to his master, and found hi
wounded nigh to death, wherefore he fetched his hor
and bore him back with him to the abbey. And the
they laid him in a bed, and looked to his wounds; a
when he had lain many days grievously sick, he at
last barely escaped with his life.

"Sir Galahad," said the squire, "the knight who ov
threw King Bagdemagus sent you greeting, and bade y
bear this shield."

"Now blessed be God and fortune," said Sir Galaha
and hung the shield about his neck, and armed him, a
rode forth.

non he met the White Knight by the hermitage, and
h saluted courteously the other.

Sir," said Sir Galahad, "this shield I bear hath surely
ll marvellous history."

Thou sayest rightly," answered he. "That shield was
le in the days of Joseph of Arimathea, the gentle knight
o took our Lord down from the cross. He, when he
Jerusalem with his kindred, came to the country of
g Evelake, who warred continually with one Tollome;
when, by the teaching of Joseph, King Evelake became
hristian, this shield was made for him in our Lord's
ie; and through its aid King Tollome was defeated.
when King Evelake met him next in battle, he hid
n a veil, and suddenly uncovering it, he showed his
nies the figure of a bleeding man nailed to a cross, at
t of which they were discomfited and fled. Presently
r that, a man whose hand was smitten off touched the
s upon the shield, and had his hand restored to him;
many other miracles it worked. But suddenly the
s that was upon it vanished away. Anon both Joseph
King Evelake came to Britain, and by the preaching
oseph the people were made Christians. And when
ngth he lay upon his death-bed, King Evelake begged
im some token ere he died. Then, calling for his
d, he dipped his finger in his own blood, for he was
ling fast, and none could staunch the wound, and
ed that cross upon it, saying, 'This cross shall ever
as bright as now, and the last of my lineage shall wear
hield about his neck, and go forth to all the marvellous
s he will achieve.' "

hen the White Knight had thus spoken he vanished
enly away, and Sir Galahad returned to the abbey.
he alighted, came a monk, and prayed him to go see
nb in the churchyard, wherefrom came such a great

and hideous noise, that none could hear it but they w nigh mad, or lost all strength. "And, sir," said he, deem it is a fiend."

"Lead me thither," said Sir Galahad.

When they were come near the place, "Now," said monk, "go thou to the tomb, and lift it up."

And Galahad, nothing afraid, quickly lifted up the sto and forthwith came out a foul smoke, and from the mi thereof leaped up the loathliest figure that ever he had s in the likeness of man; and Galahad blessed himself, for knew it was a fiend of hell. Then he heard a voice cry out, "Oh, Galahad, I cannot tear thee as I would; I see many angels round thee, that I may not come at thee."

Then the fiend suddenly disappeared with a marvell great cry; and Sir Galahad, looking in the tomb, saw th a body all armed, with a sword beside it. "Now, f brother," said he to the monk, "let us remove this curs body, which is not fit to lie in a churchyard, for when lived, a false and perjured Christian man dwelt in it. C it away, and there shall come no more hideous noise fr the tomb."

"And now must I depart," he added, "for I have mu in hand, and am upon the holy quest of the Sangreal, w many more good knights."

So he took his leave, and rode many journeys backwa and forwards as adventure would lead him; and at one day he departed from a castle without first heari mass, which was it ever his custom to hear before he his lodging. Anon he found a ruined chapel on a mou tain, and went in and kneeled before the altar, and pra for wholesome counsel what to do; and as he prayed heard a voice, which said, "Depart, adventurous knig unto the Maiden's Castle, and redress the violence a wrongs there done!"

H, GALAHAD, I CANNOT TEAR THEE AS I WOULD"

earing these words he cheerfully arose, and mounted
orse, and rode but half a mile, when he saw before him
ong castle, with deep ditches round it, and a fair river
ing past. And seeing an old churl hard by, he asked
what men called that castle.

Fair sir," said he, "it is the Maiden's Castle."

t is a cursed place," said Galahad, "and all its masters
but felons, full of mischief and hardness and shame."

For that good reason," said the old man, "thou wert
advised to turn thee back."

For that same reason," quoth Sir Galahad, "will I the
e certainly ride on."

nen, looking at his armour carefully, to see that nothing
d him, he went forward, and presently there met him
n damsels, who cried out, "Sir Knight, thou ridest in
t peril, for thou hast two waters to pass over."

Why should I not pass over them?" said he, and rode
ght on.

non he met a squire, who said, "Sir Knight, the masters
nis castle defy thee, and bid thee go no further, till
showest them thy business here."

Fair fellow," said Sir Galahad, "I am come here to
oy their wicked customs."

f that be thy purpose," answered he, "thou wilt have
n to do."

Go thou," said Galahad, "and hasten with my message."
a few minutes after rode forth furiously from the
vays of the castle seven knights, all brothers, and
g out, "Knight, keep thee," bore down all at once upon
Galahad. But thrusting forth his spear, he smote the
nost to the earth, so that his neck was almost broken,
warded with his shield the spears of all the others,
n every one brake off from it, and shivered into pieces.
he drew out his sword, and set upon them hard and

fiercely, and by his wondrous force drave them before h and chased them to the castle gate, and there he sl them.

At that came out to him an ancient man, in priest's ve ments, saying, "Behold, sir, here, the keys of this castl

Then he unlocked the gates, and found within a mu tude of people, who cried out, "Sir Knight, ye be welcor for long have we waited thy deliverance," and told him t the seven felons he had slain had long enslaved the peo round about, and killed all knights who passed that w because the maiden whom they had robbed of the castle h foretold that by one knight they should themselves be ov thrown.

"Where is the maiden?" asked Sir Galahad.

"She lingereth below in a dungeon," said they.

So Sir Galahad went down and released her, and restor her her inheritance; and when he had summoned the baro of the country to do her homage, he took his leave, a departed.

Presently thereafter, as he rode, he entered a great fo est, and in a glade thereof met two knights, disguised, w proffered him to joust. These were Sir Lancelot, h father, and Sir Percival, but neither knew the other. he and Sir Lancelot encountered first, and Sir Galah smote down his father. Then drawing his sword, for h spear was broken, he fought with Sir Percival, and stru so mightily that he clave Sir Percival's helm, and smo him from his horse.

Now hard by where they fought there was a herm age, where dwelt a pious woman, a recluse, who, wh she heard the sound, came forth, and seeing Sir Galah ride, she cried, "God be with thee, the best knight in t world; had yonder knights known thee as well as I d they would not have encountered with thee."

When Sir Galahad heard that, fearing to be made own, he forthwith smote his horse with his spurs, d departed at a great pace.

Sir Lancelot and Sir Percival heard her words also, and le fast after him, but within a while he was out of their ht. Then Sir Percival rode back to ask his name of the luse; but Sir Lancelot went forward on his quest, and lowing any path his horse would take, he came by-and-by er nightfall to a stone cross hard by an ancient chapel. nen he had alighted and tied his horse up to a tree, he nt and looked in through the chapel door, which was all nous and wasted, and there within he saw an altar, nly decked with silk, whereon there stood a fair candle- k of silver, bearing six great lights. And when Sir ncelot saw the light, he tried to get within the chapel, could find no place. So, being passing weary and vy, he came again to his horse, and when he had unsad- l him, and set him free to pasture, he unlaced his helm, ungirded his sword, and laid him down to sleep upon shield before the cross.

nd while he lay between waking and sleeping, he saw e by him two white palfreys bearing a litter, wherein ck knight lay, and the palfreys stood still by the cross. n Sir Lancelot heard the sick man say, "O sweet Lord, n shall this sorrow leave me, and the holy vessel pass ne, wherethrough I shall be blessed? for I have long ired."

ith that Sir Lancelot saw the chapel open, and the llestick with the six tapers come before the cross, but ould see none who bare it. Then came there also a of silver, and thereon the holy vessel of the Sangreal. when the sick knight saw them, he sat up, and lifting his hands, said, "Fair Lord, sweet Lord, who art here in this holy vessel, have mercy on me, that I may be

whole"; and therewith crept upon his hands a knees so nigh, that might touch the vess and when he had kiss it, he leaped up, and sto and cried aloud, "Lo God, I thank Thee, fo am made whole." Th the Holy Grale depart with the table and the ver candlesticks into chapel, so that Sir Lancelot saw it no more, nor for his si sake could he follow it. And the knight who was heal went on his way.

Then Sir Lancelot awoke, and marvelled whether he h seen aught but a dream. And as he marvelled, he hea a voice saying, "Sir Lancelot, thou art unworthy, go th hence, and withdraw thee from this holy place." A when he heard that, he was passing heavy, for he t thought him of his sins.

So he departed weeping, and cursed the day of his bir for the words went into his heart, and he knew wherefo he was thus driven forth. Then he went to seek his ar and horse, but could not find them; and then he called hi self the wretchedest and most unhappy of all knights, a said, "My sin hath brought me unto great dishonour: f when I sought earthly honours, I achieved them ever; b now I take upon me holy things, my guilt doth hinder m and shameth me; therefore had I no power to stir or spe when the holy blood appeared before me."

So thus he sorrowed till it was day, and he heard t birds sing; then was he somewhat comforted, and depa ing from the cross on foot, he came into a wild forest, a

high mountain, and there he found a hermitage; and, eling before the hermit down upon both his knees, he d for mercy for his wicked works, and prayed him to r his confession. But when he told his name, the her- marvelled to see him in so sore a case, and said, "Sir, ye ht to thank God more than any knight living, for He n given thee more honour than any; yet for thy presump- , while in deadly sin to come into the presence of His n and blood, He suffered thee neither to see nor follow Wherefore, believe that all thy strength and manhood avail thee little, when God is against thee."

hen Sir Lancelot wept and said, "Now know I well ell me truth."

hen he confessed to him, and told him all his sins, and he had for fourteen years served but Queen Guinevere , and forgotten God, and done great deeds of arms her, and not for Heaven, and had little or nothing ked God for the honour that he won. And then Sir celot said, "I pray you counsel me."

will counsel thee," said he: "never more enter into queen's company when ye can avoid it."

Sir Lancelot promised him.

Look that your heart and your th accord," said the good man, l ye shall have more honour and e nobleness than ever ye have had." hen were his arms and horse re- d to him, and so he took his leave, rode forth, repenting greatly.

ow Sir Percival had ridden back e recluse, to learn who that knight was whom she had d the best in the world. And when he had told her he was Sir Percival, she made passing great joy of for she was his mother's sister, wherefore she opened

her door to him, and made him good cheer. And on t
morrow she told him of her kindred to him, and they bo
made great rejoicing. Then he asked her who that knig
was, and she told him, "He it is who on Whit Sunday l
was clad in the red robe, and bare the red arms; and he ha
no peer, for he worketh all by miracle and shall be nev
overcome by any earthly hands."

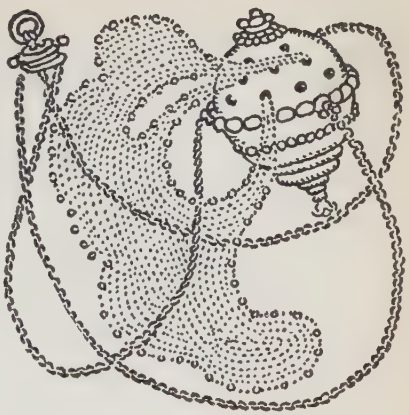
"By my goodwill," said Sir Percival, "I will never af
these tidings have to do with Sir Galahad but in the w
of kindness; and I would fain learn where I may fi
him."

"Fair nephew," said she, "ye must ride to the Castle
Goth, where he hath a cousin; by him ye may be lodg
and he will teach you the way to go; but if he can t
you no tidings, ride straight to the Castle of Carbon
where the wounded king is lying, for there shall ye sur
hear true tidings of him."

So Sir Percival departed from his aunt, and rode t
evensong time, when he was ware of a monastery clos
round with walls and deep ditches, where he knocked at t
gate, and anon was let in. And there he had good che
that night, and on the morrow heard mass. And beside t
altar where the priest stood was a rich bed of silk a
cloth of gold; and on the bed there lay a man passing o
having a crown of gold upon his head, and all his body w
full of great wounds, and his eyes almost wholly blin
and ever he held up his hands and said, "Sweet Lord, f
get not me!"

Then Sir Percival asked one of the brethren who he w

"Sir," said the good man, "ye have heard of Joseph
Arimathea, how he was sent of Jesus Christ into this la
to preach and teach the Christian faith. Now, in the c
of Sarras he converted a king named Evelake, and this
he. He came with Joseph to this land, and ever desir



tly to see the Sangreal; n a time he came nigh eto, and was struck al- t blind. Then he cried for mercy, and said, r Lord, I pray thee let never die until a good ght of my blood achieve Sangreal, and I may see kiss him.' When he thus prayed, he heard oice that said, 'Thy vers be heard and an- red, for thou shalt not die till that knight kiss thee; and n he cometh shall thine eyes be opened and thy wounds ealed.' And now hath he lived here for three hundred ers in a holy life, and men say a certain knight of King aur's court shall shortly heal him."

hereat Sir Percival marvelled greatly, for he well knew that knight should be; and so, taking his leave of the k, departed.

ıen he rode on till noon, and came into a valley where net twenty men-at-arms bearing a dead knight on a And they cried to him, "Whence comest thou?"

From King Arthur's court," he answered.

ıen they all cried together, "Slay him," and set upon

ıt he smote down the first man to the ground, and his e upon him; whereat seven of them all at once assailed and others slew his horse. Thus he had been either ı or slain, but by good chance Sir Galahad was passing aat way, who, seeing twenty men attacking one, cried, y him not," and rushed upon them; and, as fast as his e could drive, he encountered with the foremost man,

and smote him down. Then, his spear being broken, drew forth his sword and struck out on the right hand a on the left, at each blow smiting down a man, till the mainder fled, and he pursued them.

Then Sir Percival, knowing that it was Sir Galah would fain have overtaken him, but could not, for horse was slain. Yet followed he on foot as fast as could go; and as he went there met him a yeoman rid on a palfrey, and leading in his hand a great black ste So Sir Percival prayed him to lend him the steed, that might overtake Sir Galahad. But he replied, "That I not do, fair sir, for the horse is my master's, and sho I lend it he would slay me." So he departed, and Sir P cival sat down beneath a tree in heaviness of heart. A as he sat, anon a knight went riding past on the black st which the yeoman had led. And presently after came yeoman back in haste, and asked Sir Percival if he had s a knight riding his horse.

"Yea," said Sir Percival.

"Alas," said the yeoman, "he hath reft him from me strength, and my master will slay me."

Then he besought Sir Percival to take his hackney a follow, and get back his steed. So he rode quickly, a overtook the knight, and cried, "Knight, turn agai Whereat he turned and set his spear, and smote Sir Pe val's hackney in the breast, so that it fell dead, and t went on his way. Then cried Sir Percival after hi "Turn now, false knight, and fight with me on foot"; he would not, and rode out of sight.

Then was Sir Percival passing wroth and heavy of he and lay down to rest beneath a tree, and slept till m night. When he awoke he saw a woman standing by h who said to him right fiercely, "Sir Percival, what d thou here?"

W SIR PERCIVAL KILLED THE SERPENT

do neither good nor evil," said he.
f thou wilt promise me," said she, "to do my will when-
I shall ask thee, I will bring thee here a horse that
bear thee wheresoever thou desirest."
that he was full glad, and promised as she asked.
anon she came again, with a great black steed, strong
well apparelled. So Sir Percival mounted, and rode
igh the clear moonlight, and within less than an hour
gone a four days' journey, till he came to a rough water
roared; and his horse would have borne him into it,
Sir Percival would not suffer him, yet could he scarce
ain him. And seeing the water so furious, he made
ign of the cross upon his forehead, whereat the horse
enly shook him off, and with a terrible sound leaped
the water and disappeared, the waves all burning up
mes around him. Then Sir Percival knew it was a
which had brought him the horse; so he commended
elf to God, and prayed that he might escape tempta-
and continued in prayer till it was day.
en he saw that he was on a wild mountain, nigh sur-
ded on all sides by the sea, and filled with wild beasts;
going on into a valley, he saw a serpent carrying a
g lion by the neck. With that came another lion, cry-
nd roaring after the serpent, and anon overtook him,
began to battle with him. And Sir Percival helped
ion, and drew his sword, and gave the serpent such a
e that it fell dead. Thereat the lion fawned upon
like a dog, licking his hands, and crouching at his
and at night lay down by him and slept at his side.
d at noon the next day Sir Percival saw a ship come
g before a strong wind upon the sea towards him, and
se and went towards it. And when it came to shore,
und it covered with white samite, and on the deck
stood an old man dressed in priest's robes, who

said, "God be with you, fair sir; whence come y

"I am a knight of King Arthur's court," said he, "
follow the quest of the Sangreal; but here have I lost
self in this wilderness."

"Fear nothing," said the old man, "for I have come f
a strange country to comfort thee."

Then he told Sir Percival it was a fiend of hell u
which he had ridden to the sea, and that the lion, whon
had delivered from the serpent, meant the Church.
Sir Percival rejoiced at these tidings, and entered into
ship, which presently sailed from the shore into the s

Now when Sir Bors rode forth from Camelot to seek
Sangreal, anon he met a holy man riding on an ass,
courteously saluted him.

"Who are ye, son?" said the good man.

"I am a knight," said he, "in quest of the Sangreal,
would fain have thy counsel, for he shall have much ear
honour who may bring it to a favourable end."

"That is truth," said the good man, "for he shall be
best knight of the world; yet know that none shall ga
save by sinless living."

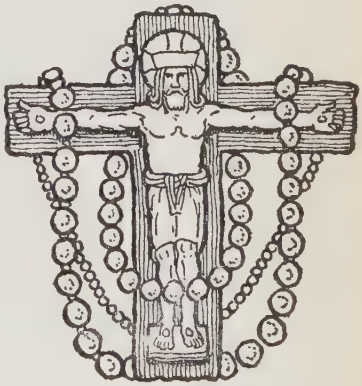
So they rode to his hermitage together, and there
prayed Sir Bors to abide that night, and anon they went
the chapel, and Sir Bors was confessed. And they
bread and drank water together.

"Now," said the hermit, "I pray thee eat no other
till thou sit at the table where the Sangreal shall
Thereto Sir Bors agreed.

"Also," said the hermit, "it were wise that ye should w
a sackcloth garment next your skin, for penance";
in this also did Sir Bors as he was counselled. And a
wards he armed himself and took his leave.

Then rode he onwards all that day, and as he rod
saw a passing great bird sit in an old dry tree, whereo

s were left; and many little birds lay round the great
nigh dead with hunger. Then did the big bird smite
elf with his own bill, and bled till he died amongst
ttle ones, and they recovered life in drinking up his
l. When Sir Bors saw this he knew it was a token,
ode on full of thought. And about eventide he came
tower, whereto he prayed admission, and he was re-
d gladly by the lady of the castle. But when a sup-
of many meats and dainties was set before him, he
mbered his vow, and bade a squire to bring him
, and therein he dipped his bread, and ate.



en said the lady, "Sir Bors,
r ye like not my bread."
ea, truly," said he; "God
thee, madam; but I may
other meat this day."
ter supper came a squire,
aid, "Madam, bethink thee
ovide a champion for thee
rrow for the tourney, or
shall thy sister have thy
."

that the lady wept, and great sorrow. But Sir Bors prayed her to be com-
l, and asked her why the tournament was held. Then
ld him how she and her sister were the daughters of
Anianse, who left them all his lands between them;
ow her sister was the wife of a strong knight, named
'ridan le Noir, who had taken from herself all her
save the one tower wherein she dwelt. "And now,"
he, "this also will they take, unless I find a champion
morrow."

en said Sir Bors, "Be comforted; to-morrow I will
for thee"; whereat she rejoiced not a little, and sent

word to Sir Pridan that she was provided and ready. Sir Bors lay on the floor, and in no bed, nor ever woul otherwise till he had achieved his quest.

On the morrow he arose and clothed himself, and into the chapel, where the lady met him, and they h mass together. Anon he called for his armour, and with a goodly company of knights to the battle. And lady prayed him to refresh himself ere he should f but he refused to break his fast until the tournament done. So they all rode together to the lists, and there saw the lady's eldest sister, and her husband, Sir Pr le Noir. And a cry was made by the heralds that, wh ever win, his lady should have all the other's lands.

Then the two knights departed asunder a little sp and came together with such force that both their sp were shivered, and their shields and hauberks pie through; and both fell to the ground sorely wounded, their horses under them. But swiftly they arose, drew their swords, and smote each other on the head many great and heavy blows, till the blood ran down t bodies; and Sir Pridan was a full good knight, so tha Bors had more ado than he had thought for to overc him.

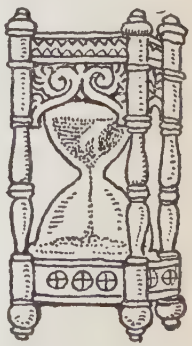
But at last Sir Pridan grew a little faint; that insta perceived Sir Bors, and rushed upon him the more v mently, and smote him fiercely, till he rent off his helm, then gave him great strokes upon his visage with the fl his sword, and bade him yield or be slain.

And then Sir Pridan cried him mercy, and said, " God's sake slay me not, and I will never war against lady more." So Sir Bors let him go, and his wife away with all her knights.

Then all those who had held lands of the lady of tower came and did homage to her again, and swore fe

when the country was at peace Sir Bors departed, and forth into a forest until it was midday, and there befell a marvellous adventure.

or at a place where two ways parted, there met him knights, bearing Sir Lionel, his brother, all naked, id on a horse, and as they rode, they beat him sorely thorns, so that the blood trailed down in more than a lred places from his body; but for all this he uttered no l or groan, so great he was of heart. As soon as Sir knew his brother, he put his spear in rest to run and ie him; but in the same moment heard a woman's voice close beside him in the wood, "St. Mary, succour thy l"; and, looking round, he saw a damsel whom a felon nt dragged after him into the thickets; and she, per-ng him, cried piteously for help, and adjured him to er her as he was a sworn knight. Then was Sir Bors troubled, and knew not what to do, for he thought in himself, "If I let my brother be, he be murdered; but if I help not the l, she is shamed forever, and my vow oelleth me to set her free; wherefore I first help her, and trust my brother God."



, riding to the knight who held the sel, he cried out, "Sir Knight, lay your off that maid, or else ye be but dead." that the knight set down the maid, and ped his shield, and drew forth his d against Sir Bors, who ran at him, and smote him igh both shield and shoulder, and threw him to the ; and when he pulled his spear forth, the knight ned. Then the maid thanked Sir Bors heartily, and t her on the knight's horse, and brought her to her men-ns, who presently came riding after her. And they

made much joy, and besou
him to come to her fathe
great lord, and he should
right welcome. But "trul
said he, "I may not at
time, for I have a great
venture yet to do"; and co
mending them to God, he
parted in great haste to
his brother.

So he rode, seeking him
the track of the horse
great while. Anon he met a seeming holy man riding u
a strong black horse, and asked him, had he seen pass
that way a knight led bound and beaten with thorns by
others.

"Yea, truly, such an one I saw," said the man; "but h
dead, and lo! his body is hard by in a bush."

Then he showed him a newly slain body lying in a th
bush, which seemed indeed to be Sir Lionel. Then m
Sir Bors such mourning and sorrow that by-and-by he
into a swoon upon the ground. And when he came to h
self again, he took the body in his arms and put it on
horse's saddle, and bore it to a chapel hard by, and wo
have buried it. But when he made the sign of the cr
he heard a full great noise and cry as though all the fie
of hell had been about him, and suddenly the body and
chapel and the old man vanished all away. Then he kn
that it was the devil who had thus beguiled him, and
his brother yet lived.

Then held he up his hands to heaven, and thanked G
for his own escape from hurt, and rode onwards;
anon, as he passed by an hermitage in a forest, he saw
brother sitting armed by the door. And when he saw

as filled with joy, and lighted from his horse, and ran
n and said, "Fair brother, when came ye hither?"
t Sir Lionel answered, with an angry face, "What vain
s be these, when for you I might have been slain?
ye not see me bound and led away to death, and left
i that peril to go succouring a gentlewoman, the like
eof no brother ever yet hath done? Now, for thy
misdeed, I do defy thee, and ensure thee speedy
."
en Sir Bors prayed his brother to abate his anger, and
"Fair brother, remember the love that should be be-
i us twain."
t Sir Lionel would not hear, and prepared to fight,
nounted his horse and came before him, crying, "Sir
keep thee from me, for I shall do to thee as a felon and
itor; therefore, start upon thy horse, for if thou wilt
will run upon thee as thou standest."
t for all his words Sir Bors would not defend himself
st his brother. And anon the fiend stirred up Sir
el to such rage, that he rushed over him and overthrew
with his horse's hoofs, so that he lay swooning on the
nd. Then would he have rent off his helm and slain
but the hermit of that place ran out, and prayed
o forbear, and shielded Sir Bors with his body.
en Sir Lionel cried out, "Now, God so help me, sir
t, but I shall slay thee else thou depart, and him too
thee."
d when the good man utterly refused to leave Sir Bors,
note him on the head until he died, and then he took
rother by the helm and unlaced it, to have stricken off
ead, and so he would have done, but suddenly was
d off backwards by a knight of the Round Table, who,
e will of Heaven, was passing by that place—Sir
revance by name.

"Sir Lionel," he cried, "will ye slay your brother, of the best knights of all the world? That ought no to suffer."

"Why," said Sir Lionel, "will ye hinder me and me in this strife? Beware, lest I shall slay both thee and h

And when Sir Colgrevance refused to let them be, Lionel defied him, and gave him a stroke through helmet, whereat Sir Colgrevance drew his sword, smote again right manfully. And so long they fo together that Sir Bors awoke from his swoon, and t to rise and part them, but had no strength to stand upo feet.

Anon Sir Colgrevance saw him, and cried out to him help, for now Sir Lionel had nigh defeated him. W Sir Bors heard that, he struggled to his feet, and put helmet on, and took his sword. But before he could c to him, Sir Lionel had smitten off Sir Colgrevance's h and thrown him to the earth and slain him. Then tu he to his brother as a man possessed by fiends, and gave such a stroke as bent him nearly double.

But still Sir Bors prayed him for God's sake to quit battle, "For if it befell us that we either slew the othe should die for care of that sin."

"Never will I spare thee if I master thee," cried out Lionel.

Then Sir Bors drew his sword all weeping, and s "Now, God have mercy on me, though I defend my against my brother"; with that he lifted up his swor strike, but suddenly he heard a mighty voice, "Put up sword, Sir Bors, and flee, or thou shalt surely slay hi And then there fell upon them both a fiery cloud, wh flamed and burned their shields, and they fell to the e in sore dread.

Anon Sir Bors rose to his feet, and saw that Sir Li

V SIR BORS WAS SAVED FROM KILLING HIS BROTHER

taken no harm. Then came the voice again, and said, Bors, go hence and leave thy brother, and ride thou vard to the sea, for there Sir Percival abideth thee."

hen he said to his brother, "Brother, forgive me all my pass against thee."

nd Sir Lionel answered, "God forgive it thee, as I do."

hen he departed and rode to the sea, and on the strand ound a ship all covered with white samite, and as soon e had entered thereinto, it put forth from the shore. in the midst of the ship there stood an armed knight, m he knew to be Sir Percival. Then they rejoiced tly over each other, and said, "We lack nothing now the good knight Sir Galahad."

ow when Sir Galahad had rescued Sir Percival from twenty knights he rode into a vast forest. And after y days it befell that he came to a castle whereat was a nament. And the knights of the castle were put to the e; which when he saw, he set his spear in rest and ran lp them, and smote down many of their adversaries. as it chanced, Sir Gawain was amongst the stranger hts, and when he saw the white shield with the red , he knew it was Sir Galahad, and proffered to joust him. So they encountered, and having broken their s, they drew their swords, and Sir Galahad smote Sir ain so sorely on the helm that he clove it through, and k on slanting to the earth, carving the horse's shoulder ain, and Sir Gawain fell to the earth. Then Sir Gala- eat back all who warred against the castle, yet would t wait for thanks, but rode away that no man might him.

d he rested that night at a hermitage, and when he sleep, he heard a knocking at the door. So he rose, found a damsel there, who said, "Sir Galahad, I will e arm you, and mount upon your horse and follow me,

for I will show you within these three days the hig
adventure that ever any knight saw."

Anon Sir Galahad armed him, and took his horse,
commended himself to God, and bade the gentlewoman
and he would follow where she liked.

So they rode onwards to the sea as fast as their ho
might gallop, and at night they came to a castle in a va
enclosed by running water, and by strong and high w
whereinto they entered and had great cheer, for the
of the castle was the damsel's mistress.

And when he was unarmed, the damsel said to her l
"Madam, shall we abide here this night?"

"Nay," said she, "but only till he hath dined and sle
little."

So he ate and slept a while, till the maid called
and armed him by torchlight; and when he had sal
the lady of the castle, the damsel and Sir Galahad
on.

Anon they came to the seaside, and lo! the ship, whe
were Sir Percival and Sir Bors, abode by the shore. T
they cried, "Welcome, Sir Galahad, for we have awa
thee long."

Then they rejoiced to see each other, and told of all t
adventures and temptations. And the damsel went into
ship with them, and spake to Sir Percival, "Sir Perc
know ye not who I am?"

And he replied, "Nay, certainly, I know thee not."

Then said she, "I am thy sister, the daughter of l
Pellinore, and am sent to help thee and these knights
fellows, to achieve the quest which ye all follow."

So Sir Percival rejoiced to see his sister, and they
parted from the shore. And after a while they came u
a whirlpool, where their ship could not live. T
saw they another greater ship hard by and went tow

ut saw neither man nor woman therein. And on the of it these words were written, "Thou who shalt enter beware that thou be in steadfast belief, for I am Faith; f thou doubtest, I cannot help thee." Then were they dread, but, commending themselves to God, they en- in.

soon as they were on board they saw a fair bed, reon lay a crown of silk, and at the foot was a fair and sword drawn from its scabbard half a foot and more. pommel was of precious stones of many colours, every ır having a different virtue, and the scales of the haft of two ribs of different beasts. The one was bone of pent from Calidone forest, named the serpent of the ; and its virtue saveth all men who hold it from wea- s. The other was of a fish that haunteth the floods of rates, named Ertanax; and its virtue causeth whoever th it to forget all other things, whether of joy or pain, he thing he seeth before him.

n the name of God," said Sir Percival, "I shall assay ndle this sword"; and set his hand to it, but could not it. "By my faith," said he, "now have I failed."

Bors set his hand to it, and failed also.

en came Sir Galahad, and saw these letters written red ood, "None shall draw me forth save the hardiest of en; but he that draweth me shall never be shamed or ded to death." "By my faith," said Sir Galahad, "I l draw it forth, but dare not try."

may try safely," said the gentlewoman, Sir Percival's "for be ye well assured the drawing of this sword is l to all but you. For this was the sword of David, of Israel, and Solomon his son made for it this mar- s pommel and this wondrous sheath, and laid it on ed till thou shouldest come and take it up; and though thee some have dared to raise it, yet have they all

been maimed or wounded for their daring."

"Where," said Sir Galahad, "shall we find a girdle for it?"

"Fair sir," said she, "dismay you not"; and therewith took from out a box a girdle, nobly wrought with golden thread, set full of precious stones and with a rich gold buckle. "This girdle, lords," said she, "is made for the most part of mine own hair, which, while I was yet in the world, I loved full well; but when I knew that this adventure was ordained me, I cut off and wove as ye now see."

Then they all prayed

Sir Galahad to take the sword, and so anon he gripped it in his fingers; and the maiden girt it round his waist, saying, "Now reck I not though I die, for I have made thee the worthiest knight of all the world."

"Fair damsel," said Sir Galahad, "ye have done so much that I shall be your knight all the days of my life."

Then the ship sailed a great way on the sea, and brought them to land near the Castle of Carteloise. When they were landed came a squire and asked them, "Be ye of King Arthur's court?"

"We are," said they.

"In an evil hour are ye come," said he, and went ba swiftly to the castle.

Within a while they heard a great horn blow, and saw multitude of well-armed knights come forth, who ba them yield or die. At that they ran together, and S Percival smote one to the earth and mounted his hors and so likewise did Sir Bors and Sir Galahad, and so had they routed all their enemies and alighted on foot, a with their swords slew them downright, and entered in the castle.

Then came there forth a priest, to whom Sir Galaha kneeled and said, "In sooth, good father, I repent me of th slaughter; but we were first assailed, or else it had not been

"Repent ye not," said the good man, "for if ye lived long as the world lasted ye could do no better deed, f these were all the felon sons of a good knight, Earl Herno whom they have thrown into a dungeon, and in his nam have slain priests and clerks, and beat down chapels f and near."

Then Sir Galahad prayed the priest to bring him to t earl; who, when he saw Sir Galahad, cried out, "Lo have I waited for thy coming, and now I pray thee ho me in thine arms that I may die in peace."

And therewith, when Sir Galahad had taken him in h arms, his soul departed from his body.

Then came a voice in the hearing of them all, "Depa now, Sir Galahad, and go quickly to the maimed king, f he hath long abided to receive health from thy hand."

So the three knights departed, and Sir Percival's sist with them, and came to a vast forest, and saw before the a white hart, exceeding fair, led by four lions; and ma velling greatly at that sight, they followed.

Anon they came to a hermitage and a chapel, whe unto the hart entered, and the lions with it. Then a pri

ed mass, and presently they saw the hart change into gure of a man, most sweet and comely to behold; and our lions also changed and became a man, an eagle, a and an ox. And suddenly all those five figures van- without a sound. Then the knights marvelled greatly, ell upon their knees, and when they rose they prayed riest to tell them what that sight might mean.

/hat saw ye, sirs?" said he, "for I saw nothing." Then told him.

h, lords!" said he, "ye are full welcome; now know I ye be the knights who shall achieve the Sangreal, for them alone such mysteries are revealed. The hart ye s One above all men, white and without blemish, and our lions with Him are the four evangelists."

nen they heard that they heartily rejoiced, and thank- ne priest, departed.

on, as they passed by a certain castle, an armed knight enly came after them, and cried out to the damsel, "By oly cross, ye shall not go till ye have yielded to the cus- f the castle."

et her go," said Sir Percival, "for a maiden, where- r she cometh, is free."

/hatever maiden passeth here," replied the knight, t give a dishful of her blood from her right arm."

is a foul and shameful custom," cried Sir Galahad oth his fellows, "and sooner will we die than let this en yield thereto."

hen shall ye die," replied the knight, and as he spake came out from a gate hard by, ten or twelve more, encountered with them, running upon them vehe- y with a great cry. But the three knights withstood and set their hands to their swords, and beat them and slew them.

that came forth a company of threescore knights, all

armed. "Fair lords," said Sir Galahad, "have mercy yourselves and keep from us."

"Nay, fair lords," they answered, "rather be advised us, and yield ye to our custom."

"It is an idle word," said Galahad, "in vain ye speak

"Well," said they, "will ye die?"

"We be not come thereto as yet," replied Sir Galah

Then did they fall upon each other, and Sir Galah drew forth his sword, and smote on the right hand and the left, and slew so mightily that all who saw him thou he was a monster and no earthly man. And both his co rades helped him well, and so they held the field agai that multitude till it was night. Then came a good kni forward from the enemy and said, "Fair knights, abide w us to-night and be right welcome; by the faith of our bod as we are true knights, to-morrow ye shall rise unharm and meanwhile maybe ye will, of your own accord, acc the custom of the castle when ye know it better."

So they entered and alighted and made great che Anon they asked them whence that custom came. "T lady of this castle is a leper," said they, "and can be no w cured save by the blood of a pure virgin and a kin daughter; therefore to save her life are we her serva bound to stay every maid that passeth by, and try if h blood may not cure our mistress."

Then said the damsel, "Take ye of my blood as much ye will, if it may avail your lady."

And though the three knights urged her not to put h life in that great peril, she replied, "If I die to h another's body, I shall get health to my soul," and wou not be persuaded to refuse.

So on the morrow she was brought to the sick lady, a her arm was bared, and a vein thereof was opened, and t dish filled with her blood. Then the sick lady was anoint

ewith, and anon she was whole of her malady. With Sir Percival's sister lifted up her hand and blessed her, ng, "Madam, I am come to my death to make you le; for God's love pray for me"; and thus saying she down in a swoon.

hen Sir Galahad, Sir Percival, and Sir Bors started ift her up and staunch her blood, but she had lost too h to live. So when she came to herself she said to Sir cival, "Fair brother, I must die for the healing of this , and now, I pray thee, bury me not here, but when I am d put me in a boat at the next haven and let me float at ture on the sea. And when ye come to the city of ras, to achieve the Sangreal, shall ye find me waiting by wer, and there I pray thee bury me, for there shall Sir ahad and ye also be laid." Thus having said, she died. hen Sir Percival wrote all the story of her life and put her right hand, and so laid her in a barge and covered ith silk. And the wind arising drove the barge from , and all the knights stood watching it till it was out of t.

non they returned to the castle, and forthwith fell a den tempest of thunder and lightning and rain, as if earth were broken up: and half the castle was thrown n. Then came a voice to the three knights which said, part ye now asunder till ye meet again where the med king is lying." So they parted and rode divers s.

ow after Sir Lancelot had left the hermit, he rode a while till he knew not whither to turn, and so he lay n to sleep, if haply he might dream whither to go.

nd in his sleep a vision came to him saying, "Lancelot, up and take thine armour, and enter the first ship that shalt find."

Vhen he awoke he obeyed the vision, and rode till he

came to the sea-shore, and found there a ship without sai or oars, and as soon as he was in it he smelt the sweete savour he had ever known, and seemed filled with all thing he could think of or desire. And looking round he saw fair bed, and thereon a gentlewoman lying dead, who wa Sir Percival's sister. And as Sir Lancelot looked on he he spied the writing in her right hand, and, taking it, h read therein her story. And more than a month thereafte he abode in that ship and was nourished by the grace o Heaven, as Israel was fed with manna in the desert.

And on a certain night he went ashore to pass the time for he was somewhat weary, and, listening, he heard horse come towards him, from which a knight alighte and went up into the ship; who, when he saw Sir Lancelo said, "Fair sir, ye be right welcome to mine eyes, for I ar

thy son Galahad, and lon time I have sought fo thee." With that h kneeled and asked hi blessing, and took off hi helm and kissed him, an the great joy there was be tween them no tongu can tell.

Then for half a yea they dwelt together in th ship, and served Go night and day with all their powers, and went to many un known islands, where none but wild beasts haunted, an there found many strange and perilous adventures.

And upon a time they came to the edge of a forest, be fore a cross of stone, and saw a knight armed all in white leading a white horse. Then the knight saluted them, an said to Galahad, "Ye have been long time enough wit

r father; now, therefore, leave him and ride this horse
ye achieve the Holy Quest."

hen went Sir Galahad to his father and kissed him
courteously, and said, "Fair father, I know not when
all see thee again."

nd as he took his horse a voice spake in their hearing,
shall meet no more in this life."

Now, my son, Sir Galahad," said Sir Lancelot, "since
must so part and see each other never more, I pray the
h Father of Heaven to preserve both you and me."

hen they bade farewell, and Sir Galahad entered the
st, and Sir Lancelot returned to the ship, and the wind
and drove him more than a month through the sea,
reby he slept but little, yet ever prayed that he might
the Sangreal.

o it befell upon a certain midnight, the moon shining
r, he came before a fair and rich castle, whereof the
ern gate was open towards the sea, having no keeper
two lions in the entry.

non Sir Lancelot heard a voice: "Leave now thy ship
go within the castle, and thou shalt see a part of thy de-
"

hen he armed and went towards the gate, and coming to
lions drew out his sword; but suddenly a dwarf rushed
and smote him on the arm, so that he dropt his sword,
heard again the voice, "Oh, man of evil faith and poor
ef, wherefore trusteth thou thine arms above thy
ker?" Then he put up his sword and signed the cross
n his forehead, and so passed by the lions without
.

nd going in, he found a chamber with the door shut,
ch in vain he tried to open. And listening thereat he
d a voice within, which sang so sweetly that it seemed
earthly thing, "Joy and honour be to the Father of

Heaven!" Then he kneeled down at the door, for he kne well the Sangreal was there within.

Anon the door was opened without hands, and forthwi came thereout so great a splendour as if all the torches the world had been alight together. But when he wou have entered in, a voice forbade him; wherefore he dre back, and looked, standing upon the threshold of the doo And there he saw a table of silver, and the holy vess covered with red samite, and many angels round it hol ing burning candles and a cross and all the ornaments the altar.

Then a priest stood up and offered mass, and when took the vessel up, he seemed to sink beneath that burde At that Sir Lancelot cried, "O Father, take it not for sin th I go in to help the priest, who hath much need thereof So saying, he went in, but when he came towards the tab he felt a breath of fire which issued out therefrom and smo him to the ground, so that he had no power to rise.

Then felt he many hands about him, which took hi up and laid him down outside the chapel door. The lay he in a swoon all through that night, and on the morro certain people found him senseless, and bore him to inner chamber and laid him on a bed. And there he reste living, but moving no limbs, twenty-four days and nights.

On the twenty-fifth day he opened his eyes and saw tho standing round, and said, "Why have ye waked me? for have seen marvels that no tongue can tell, and more tha any heart can think."

Then he asked where he was, and they told him, "I the Castle of Carbonek."

"Tell your lord, King Pelles," said he, "that I am S Lancelot."

At that they marvelled greatly, and told their lord it w Sir Lancelot who had lain there so long.

ANCELOT STANDING UPON
THE THRESHOLD OF THE
DOOR

men was King Pelles wondrous glad and went to see him, prayed him to abide there for a season. But Sir Lance- aid, "I know well that I have now seen as much as e eyes may behold of the Sangreal; wherefore I will rn to my own country." So he took leave of King es, and departed towards Logris.

ow after Sir Galahad had parted from Sir Lancelot, ode many days, till he came to the monastery where blind King Evelake lay, whom Sir Percival had seen. on the morrow, when he had heard mass, Sir Gala- desired to see the king, who cried out, "Welcome, Sir lhad, servant of the Lord! long have I abided thy ng. Take me now in thine arms, that I may die in e."

that Sir Galahad embraced him; and when he had one the king's eyes were opened, and he said, "Fair Jesus, suffer me now to come to Thee"; and anon oul departed.

en they buried him royally, as a king should be; and Galahad went on his way.

ithin a while he came to a chapel in a forest, in the whereof he saw a tomb which always blazed and t. And asking the brethren what that might mean, told him, "Joseph of Arimathea's son did found this stery, and one who wronged him hath lain here these hundred and fifty years and burneth evermore, until perfect knight who shall achieve the Sangreal doth ch the fire."

en said he, "I pray ye bring me to the tomb."

d when he touched the place immediately the fire quenched, and a voice came from the grave and cried, nks be to God, who now hath purged me of my sin, draweth me from earthly pains into the joys of para-

Then Sir Galahad took the body in his arms and bo it to the abbey, and on the morrow put it in the earth b fore the high altar.

Anon he departed from thence and rode five days a great forest; and after that he met Sir Percival, a a little further on Sir Bors. When they had told ea other their adventures, they rode together to the Cas of Carbonek: and there King Pelles gave them hear welcome, for he knew they should achieve the Ho Quest.

As soon as they were come into the castle, a voice cri in the midst of the chamber, "Let them who ought n now to sit at the table of the Lord rise and depart hence Then all, save those three knights, departed.

Anon they saw other knights come in with haste at t hall doors and take their harness off, who said to Sir Gal had, "Sir, we have tried sore to be with you at this table

"Ye be welcome," said he, "but whence are ye?"

So three of them said they were from Gaul; and thr from Ireland; and three from Denmark.

Then came forth the likeness of a bishop, with a cro in his hand, and four angels stood by him, and a table silver was before them, whereon was set the vessel of t Sangreal. Then came forth other angels also—two bea ing burning candles, and the third a towel, and the four a spear which bled marvellously, the drops wherefrom f into a box he held in his left hand. Anon the bishop to the wafer up to consecrate it, and at the lifting up, th saw the figure of a Child, whose visage was as bright any fire, which smote itself into the midst of the wafer a vanished, so that all saw the flesh made bread.

Thereat the bishop went to Galahad and kissed him, a bade him go and kiss his fellows; and said, "Now, servan

ne Lord, prepare for food such as none ever yet were with since the world began."

Vith that he vanished, and the knights were filled with eat dread and prayed devoutly.

nen saw they come forth from the holy vessel the vision rman bleeding all openly, whom they knew well by the ns of His passion for the Lord Himself. At that they upon their faces and were dumb. Anon he brought Holy Grale to them and spake high words of comfort, when they drank therefrom, the taste thereof was tter than any tongue could tell or heart desire. Then ce said to Galahad, "Son, with this blood which drip- from the spear anoint thou the maimed king and heal

And when thou hast this done, depart hence with rethren in a ship that ye shall find, and go to the city rras. And bear with thee the holy vessel, for it shall ore be seen in the realm of Logris."

that Sir Galahad walked to the bleeding spear, and from anointing his fingers went out straightway to naimed King Pelles, and touched his wound. Then enly he uprose from his bed as whole a man as ever as, and praised God passing thankfully with all his

.

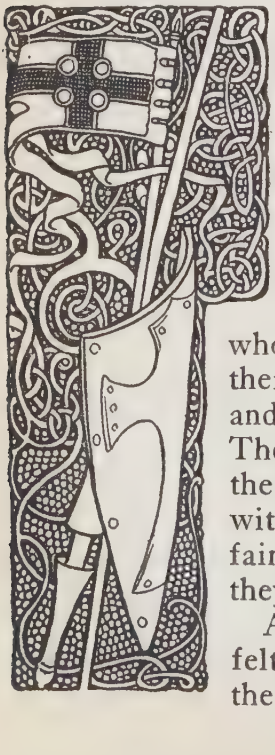
en Sir Galahad, Sir Bors, and Sir Percival departed ey had been told; and when they had ridden three they came to the sea-shore, and found the ship await- nem. Therein they entered, and saw in the midst the table and the vessel of the Sangreal, covered with mite. Then were they passing glad, and made great ence thereto. And Sir Galahad prayed that now ight leave the world and pass to God. And pres- the while he prayed, a voice said to him, "Gala- thy prayer is heard, and when thou asketh the

death of thy body thou shalt have it, and find the life of t soul."

But while they prayed and slept the ship sailed on, a when they woke they saw the city of Sarras before the and the other ship wherein was Sir Percival's sister. Th the three knights took up the holy table and the Sangr and went into the city; and there, in a chapel, they buri Sir Percival's sister right solemnly.

Now at the gate of the town they saw an old cripple s ting, whom Sir Galahad called to help them bear th weight.

"Truly," said the old man, "it is ten years since I ha gone a step without these crutches."



"Care ye not," said Sir Galaha "rise now and show goodwill."

So he assayed to move, and found h limbs as strong as any man's might h and running to the table helped carry it.

Anon there rose a rumor in the ci that a cripple had been healed by c tain marvellous strange knights.

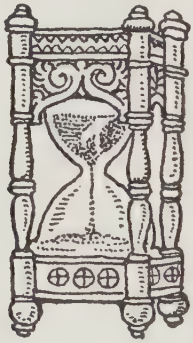
But the king, named Estouran who was a heathen tyrant, when he hea thereof, took Sir Galahad and his fellow and put them in prison in a deep ho Therein they abode a great while, but ev the Sangreal was with them and fed th with marvellous sweet food, so that th fainted not, but had all joy and comf they could wish.

At the year's end the king fell sick a felt that he should die. Then sent he f the three knights, and when they came b

him prayed their mercy for his trespasses against them.
ney forgave him gladly, and anon he died.
nen the chief men of the city took counsel together
should be king in his stead, and as they talked, a voice
l in their midst, "Choose ye the youngest of the three
hts King Estouranse cast into prison for your king."
nat they sought Sir Galahad and made him king with
assent of all the city, and else they would have slain

it within a twelvemonth came to him, upon a certain
as he prayed before the Sangreal, a man in likeness
bishop, with a great company of angels round about
and offered mass, and afterwards called to Sir Gala-
"Come forth, thou servant of the Lord, for the time
come thou hast desired so long."
ien Sir Galahad lifted up his hands and prayed, "Now,
ed Lord! would I no longer live if it might please
."
ion the bishop gave him the sacrament, and when he
received it with unspeakable gladness, he said, "Who
nou, father?"
am Joseph of Arimathea," answered he, "whom our
hath sent to bear thee fellowship."
hen he heard that, Sir Galahad went to Sir Percival
Sir Bors and kissed them and commended them to God,
g, "Salute for me Sir Lancelot, my father, and bid
remember this unstable world."
erewith he kneeled down and prayed, and suddenly
oul departed, and a multitude of angels bare it up to
en. Then came a hand from heaven and took the
and the spear and bare them out of sight.
ace then was never man so hardy as to say that he had
the Sangreal.
d after all these things, Sir Percival put off his armour

and betook him to an hermitage, and within a little wh
passed out of this world. And Sir Bors, when he had bu
ied him beside his sister, returned, weeping sore for t
loss of his two brethren, to King Arthur, at Camelot.



CHAPTER XIII

SIR LANCELOT AND THE FAIR MAID OF ASTOLAT

NOW after the quest of the Sangreal was fulfilled and all the knights who were left alive were come again to the Round Table, there was great joy in court. And passing glad were King Arthur and Queen Guinevere to see Sir Lancelot and Sir Bors, for they had long absent in that quest.

And so greatly was Sir Lancelot's fame now spread abroad that many ladies and damsels daily resorted to him and besought him for their champion; and all right quarrels did he gladly undertake for the pleasure of our Lord Christ. And always as much as he might he withdrew him from the queen.

Wherefore Queen Guinevere, who counted him for her own knight, grew wroth with him, and on a certain day she called him to her chamber, and said thus: "Sir Lancelot, daily see thy loyalty to me doth slack, for ever thou art absent from this court, and takest other ladies' quarrels than ever thou wert wont. Now do I under-

stand thee, false knight, and therefore shall I never trus thee more. Depart now from my sight, and come no mor within this court upon pain of thy head." With that sh turned from him and would hear no excuses.

So Sir Lancelot departed in heaviness of heart, and call ing Sir Bors, Sir Ector, and Sir Lionel, he told them how the queen had dealt with him.

"Fair sir," replied Sir Bors, "remember what honour y have in this country, and how ye are called the nobles knight in the world; wherefore go not, for women ar hasty and do often what they sore repent of afterwards Be ruled by my advice. Take horse and ride to the hermit age beside Windsor, and there abide till I send ye bette tidings."

To that Sir Lancelot consented, and departed with a sorrowful countenance.

Now when the queen heard of his leaving she was in wardly sorry, but made no show of grief, bearing a proud visage outwardly. And on a certain day she made a costly banquet to all the knights of the Round Table, to show she had as great joy in all others as in Sir Lancelot. And at the banquet were Sir Gawain, and his brothers Sir Agra vaine, Sir Gaheris, and Sir Gareth; also Sir Modred, Si Bors, Sir Blamor, Sir Bleoberis, Sir Ector, Sir Lionel, Si Palomedes, Sir Mador de la Port, and his cousin Sir Pa trice (a knight of Ireland), Sir Pinell le Savage, and many more.

Now Sir Pinell hated Sir Gawain because he had slai one of his kinsmen by treason; and Sir Gawain had a grea love for all kinds of fruit, which, when Sir Pinell knew he poisoned certain apples that were set upon the table, wit intent to slay him. And so it chanced as they ate and mad merry, Sir Patrice, who sat next to Sir Gawain, took on of the poisoned apples and ate it, and when he ha

LAINE, THE LILY MAID OF ASTOLAT

n he suddenly swelled up and fell down dead.
t that all the knights leapt from the board ashamed and
aged nigh out of their wits, for they knew not what to
yet seeing that the queen had made the banquet they
had suspicion of her.

My lady the queen," said Sir Gawain, "I wit well this
t was meant for me, for all men know my love for it,
now had I been nearly slain; wherefore, I fear me, ye
be ashamed."

This shall not end so," cried Sir Mador de la Port;
w have I lost a noble knight of my own blood, and for
despite and shame I will be revenged to the utter-
t."

hen he challenged Queen Guinevere concerning the
h of his cousin, but she stood still, sore abashed, and
with her sorrow and dread, she swooned.

t the noise and sudden cry came in King Arthur, and
im appealed Sir Mador, and impeached the queen.

Fair lords," said he, "full sorely am I troubled at this
er, for I must be rightful judge, and therein it repent-
me I may not do battle for my wife, for, as I deem,
deed was none of hers. But I suppose she will not
a champion, and some good knight surely will put
ody in jeopardy to save her."

ut all who had been bidden to the banquet said they
d not hold the queen excused, or be her champions, for
had made the feast, and either by herself or servants
it have come.

Alas!" said the queen, "I made this dinner for a good
t, and no evil, so God help me in my need."

My lord the king," said Sir Mador, "I require you
tily as you be a righteous king give me a day when I
have justice."

Well," said the king, "I give ye this day fifteen days,

when ye shall be ready and armed in the meadow besi
Westminster, and if there be a knight to fight with yo
God speed the right, and if not, then must my queen
burnt."

When the king and queen were alone together he ask
her how this case befell.

"I wot not how or in what manner," answered she.

"Where is Sir Lancelot?" said King Arthur, "for
would not grudge to do battle for thee."

"Sir," said she, "I cannot tell you, but all his kinsm
deem he is not in this realm."

"These be sad tidings," said the king; "I counsel ye
find Sir Bors, and pray him for Sir Lancelot's sake to
this battle for you."

So the queen departed and sent for Sir Bors to h
chamber, and besought his succour.

"Madam," said he, "what would you have me do? for
may not with my honour take this matter on me, for I was
that same dinner, and all the other knights would have m
ever in suspicion. Now do ye miss Sir Lancelot, for
would not have failed you in right nor yet in wrong, as
have often proved, but now ye have driven him from th
country."

"Alas! fair knight," said the queen, "I put me wholly
your mercy, and all that is done amiss I will amend as
will counsel me."

And therewith she kneeled down upon both her knees b
fore Sir Bors, and besought him to have mercy on her.

Anon came in King Arthur also, and prayed him of h
courtesy to help her, saying, "I require you for the love
Lancelot."

"My lord," said he, "ye require the greatest thing of m
that any man can ask, for if I do this battle for the que
I shall anger all my fellows of the Table Round; neve

ess, for my lord Sir Lancelot's sake, and for yours, I that day be the queen's champion, unless there chance ome a better knight than I am to do battle for her." this he promised on his faith.

hen were the king and queen passing glad, and thanked heartily, and so departed.

ut Sir Bors rode in secret to the hermitage where Sir celot was, and told him all these tidings.

t has chanced as I would have it," said Sir Lancelot; make ye ready for the battle, but tarry till ye see me e."

ir," said Sir Bors, "doubt not but ye shall have your "

ut many of the knights were greatly wroth with him n they heard he was to be the queen's champion, for e were few in the court but deemed her guilty.

nen said Sir Bors, "Wit ye well, fair lords, it were a ne to us all to suffer so fair and noble a lady to be burnt ack of a champion, for ever hath she proved herself a of good knights; wherefore I doubt not she is guilt- of this treason."

that were some well pleased, but others rested pass- wroth.

nd when the day was e, the king and queen all the knights went to meadow beside West- ter, where the battle ld be fought. Then queen was put in ward, a great fire was made d the iron stake where must be burnt if Sir or won the day.

So when the heralds blew, Sir Mador rode forth, an took oath that Queen Guinevere was guilty of Sir Patrice death, and his oath he would prove with his body again any who would say the contrary. Then came forth Si Bors, and said, "Queen Guinevere is in the right, and tha will I prove with my hands."

With that they both departed to their tents to make read for the battle. But Sir Bors tarried long, hoping Si Lancelot would come, till Sir Mador cried out to Kin Arthur, "Bid thy champion come forth, unless he dar not." Then was Sir Bors ashamed, and took his horse an rode to the end of the lists.

But ere he could meet Sir Mador he was aware of knight upon a white horse, armed at all points, and wit a strange shield, who rode to him and said, "I pray yo withdraw from this quarrel, for it is mine, and I hav ridden far to fight in it."

Thereat Sir Bors rode to King Arthur, and told hi that another knight was come who would do battle for th queen.

"Who is he?" said King Arthur.

"I may not tell you," said Sir Bors; "but he made covenant with me to be here to-day, wherefore I am di charged."

Then the king called that knight, and asked him if h would fight for the queen.

"Therefore came I hither, Sir King," answered he; "b let us tarry no longer, for anon I have other matters to d But wit ye well," said he to the knights of the Round Tabl "it is shame to ye for such a courteous queen to suffer th dishonour."

And all men marvelled who this knight might be, f none knew him save Sir Bors.

Then Sir Mador and the knight rode to either end

lists, and couching their spears, ran one against the
er with all their might; and Sir Mador's spear broke
rt, but the strange knight bore both him and his horse
rn to the ground. Then lightly they leaped from their
dles and drew their swords, and so came eagerly to the
le, and either gave the other many sad strokes and sore
deep wounds.

hus they fought nigh an hour, for Sir Mador was a
strong and valiant knight. But at last the strange
ght smote him to the earth, and gave him such a buffet
ne helm as well-nigh killed him. Then did Sir Mador
d, and prayed his life.

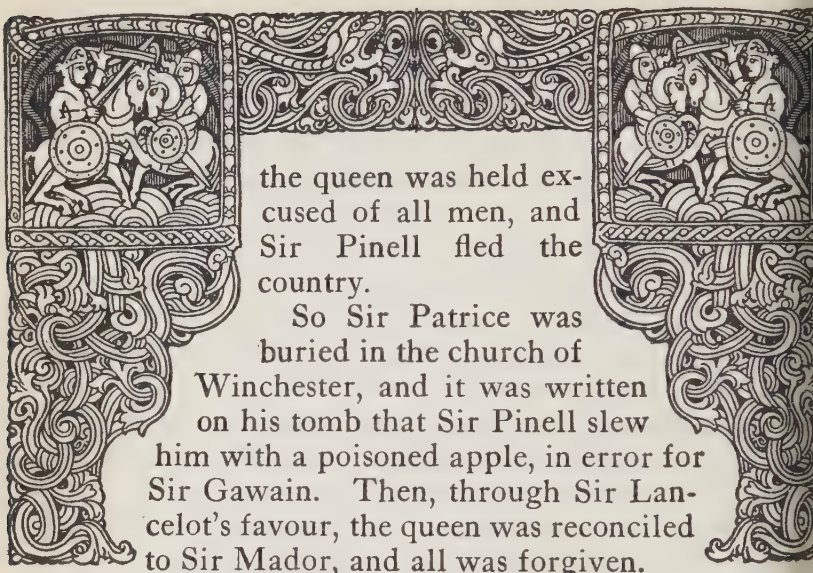
will but grant it thee," said the strange knight, "if
wilt release the queen from this quarrel forever, and
nise that no mention shall be made upon Sir Patrice's
) that ever she consented to that treason."

ll this shall be done," said Sir Mador.

nen the knights parters took up Sir Mador and led him
is tent, and the other knight went straight to the stair
of King Arthur's throne; and by that time was the
n come to the king again, and kissed him lovingly.

nen both the king and she stooped down, and thanked
night, and prayed him to put off his helm and rest him,
to take a cup of wine. And when he put his helmet
) drink, all people saw it was Sir Lancelot. But when
ueen beheld him she sank almost to the ground weep-
or sorrow and for joy, that he had done her such great
ness when she had showed him such unkindness.

en the knights of his blood gathered round him, and
was great joy and mirth in the court. And Sir Mador
Sir Lancelot were soon healed of their wounds; and
ong after came the Lady of the Lake to the court,
old all there by her enchantments how Sir Pinell, and
ne queen, was guilty of Sir Patrice's death. Whereat



the queen was held excused of all men, and Sir Pinell fled the country.

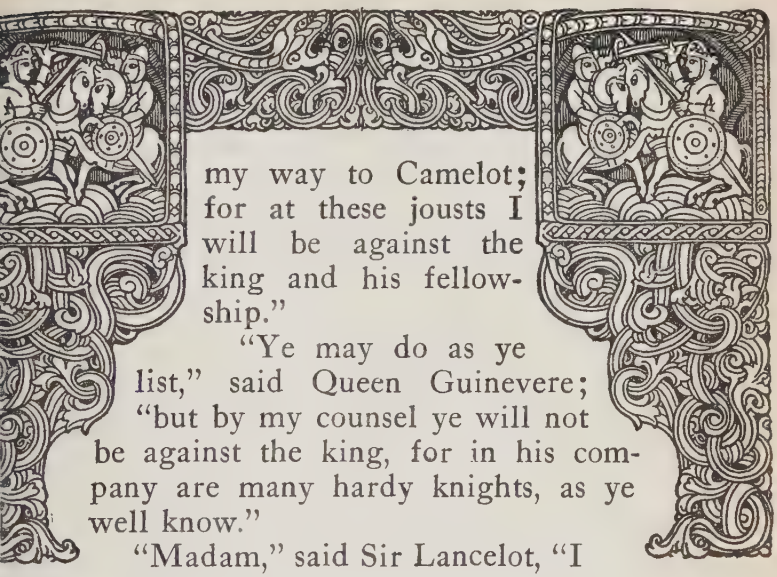
So Sir Patrice was buried in the church of Winchester, and it was written on his tomb that Sir Pinell slew him with a poisoned apple, in error for Sir Gawain. Then, through Sir Lancelot's favour, the queen was reconciled to Sir Mador, and all was forgiven.

Now fifteen days before the Feast of the Assumption o our Lady the king proclaimed a tourney to be held tha feast-day at Camelot, whereat himself and the King of Scot land would joust with all who should come against them So thither went the King of North Wales, and King An guish of Ireland, and Sir Galahaut the noble prince, an many other nobles of divers countries.

And King Arthur made ready to go, and would hav had the queen go with him, but she said that she was sick Sir Lancelot, also, made excuses, saying he was not ye whole of his wounds.

At that the king was passing heavy and grieved, and s departed alone towards Camelot. And by the way h lodged in a town called Astolat, and lay that night in th castle.

As soon as he had gone, Sir Lancelot said to the queen "This night I will rest, and to-morrow betimes will I tak



my way to Camelot; for at these jousts I will be against the king and his fellowship."

"Ye may do as ye list," said Queen Guinevere; "but by my counsel ye will not be against the king, for in his company are many hardy knights, as ye well know."

"Madam," said Sir Lancelot, "I

ye be not displeased with me, for I will take the adure that God may send me."

nd on the morrow he went to the church and heard , and took his leave of the queen, and so departed.

hen he rode long till he came to Astolat, and there ed at the castle of an old baron called Sir Bernard of llat, which was near the castle where King Arthur ed. And as Sir Lancelot entered the king espied him, knew him. Then said he to the knights, "I have just a knight who will fight full well at the joust towards h we go."

Who is it?" asked they.

s yet ye shall not know," he answered, smiling.

hen Sir Lancelot was in his chamber unarming, the aron came to him saluting him, though as yet he knew vho he was.

ow Sir Bernard had a daughter passing beautiful,

called the Fair Maid of Astolat, and when she saw Si Lancelot she loved him from that instant with her whol heart, and could not stay from gazing on him.

On the morrow, Sir Lancelot asked the old baron to len him a strange shield. "For," said he, "I would be un known."

"Sir," said his host, "ye shall have your desire, for her is the shield of my eldest son, Sir Torre, who was hur the day he was made knight, so that he cannot ride; an his shield, therefore, is not known. And, if it please you my youngest son, Sir Lavaine, shall ride with you to th jousts, for he is of his age full strong and mighty; and deem ye be a noble knight, wherefore I pray ye tell m your name."

"As to that," said Sir Lancelot, "ye must hold me ex cused at this time, but if I speed well at the jousts, I wil come again and tell you; but in anywise let me have you son, Sir Lavaine, with me, and lend me his brother' shield."

Then, ere they departed, came Elaine, the baron' daughter, and said to Sir Lancelot, "I pray thee, gentl knight, to wear my token at to-morrow's tourney."

"If I should grant you that, fair damsel," said he, "y might say that I did more for you than ever I have don for lady or damsel."

Then he bethought him that if he granted her reques he would be the more disguised, for never before had h worn any lady's token. So anon he said, "Fair damsel, will wear thy token on my helmet if thou wilt show it me."

Thereat was she passing glad, and brought him a scarle sleeve broidered with pearls, which Sir Lancelot took, and put upon his helm. Then he prayed her to keep his shield for him until he came again, and taking Sir Torre's shield instead, rode forth with Sir Lavaine towards Camelot.

ND HIS KNIGHTS

)n the morrow the trumpets blew for the tourney, and
re was a great press of dukes and earls and barons and
ıy noble knights; and King Arthur sat in a gallery to
old who did the best. So the King of Scotland and his
ghts, and King Anguish of Ireland rode forth on King
hur's side; and against them came the King of North
les, the King of a Hundred Knights, the King of North-
berland, and the noble prince Sir Galahaut.

ut Sir Lancelot and Sir Lavaine rode into a little wood
ind the party which was against King Arthur, to watch
ch side should prove the weakest.

hen was there a strong fight between the two parties,
the King of a Hundred Knights smote down the King
Scotland; and Sir Palomedes, who was on King Ar-
's side, overthrew Sir Galahaut. Then came fifteen
ghts of the Round Table and beat back the Kings of
thumberland and North Wales with their knights.

Now," said Sir Lancelot to Sir Lavaine, "if ye will
me, ye shall see yonder fellowship go back as fast as
came."

Sir," said Sir Lavaine, "I will do what I can."

hen they rode together into the thickest of the press,
there, with one spear, Sir Lancelot smote down five
hts of the Round Table, one after another, and Sir
aine overthrew two. And taking another spear, for his
was broken, Sir Lancelot smote down four more
hts, and Sir Lavaine a fifth. Then, drawing his sword,
Lancelot fought fiercely on the right hand and the left,
unhorsed Sir Safire, Sir Epinogris, and Sir Galleron.
hat the knights of the Round Table withdrew them-
s as well as they were able.

Now, mercy," said Sir Gawain, who sat by King Arthur;
at knight is that who doth such marvellous deeds of
? I should deem him by his force to be Sir Lance-

lot, but that he wears a lady's token on his helm as never Lancelot doth."

"Let him be," said King Arthur; "he will be better known, and do more ere he depart."

Thus the party against King Arthur prospered at this time, and his knights were sore ashamed. Then Sir Bors, Sir Ector, and Sir Lionel called together the knights of their blood, nine in number, and agreed to join together in one band against the two strange knights. So they encountered Sir Lancelot all at once, and by main force smote his horse to the ground; and by misfortune Sir Bors struck Sir Lancelot through the shield into the side, and the spear broke off and left the head in the wound.

When Sir Lavaine saw that, he ran to the King of Scotland and struck him off his horse, and brought it to Sir Lancelot, and helped him to mount. Then Sir Lancelot bore Sir Bors and his horse to the ground, and in like manner served Sir Ector and Sir Lionel; and turning upon three other knights he smote them down also; while Sir Lavaine did many gallant deeds.

But feeling now sorely wounded, Sir Lancelot drew his sword and proffered to fight with Sir Bors, who, by this time, was mounted anew. And as they met, Sir Ector and Sir Lionel came also, and the swords of all three drave fiercely against him. When he felt their buffets, and his wound that was so grievous, he determined to do all his best while he could yet endure, and smote Sir Bors a blow

bent his head down nearly to the ground and razed helmet off and pulled him from his horse.

Then rushing at Sir Ector and Sir Lionel, he smote them n, and might have slain all three, but when he saw their s his heart forbade him. Leaving them, therefore, on field, he hurled into the thickest of the press, and did feats of arms as never were beheld before.

nd Sir Lavaine was with him through it all, and over- w ten knights; but Sir Lancelot smote down more thirty, and most of them knights of the Round Table. hen the king ordered the trumpets to blow for the end ne tourney, and the prize to be given by the heralds to knight with the white shield who bore the red sleeve.

ut ere Sir Lancelot was found by the heralds, came King of the Hundred Knights, the King of North es, the King of Northumberland, and Sir Galahaut, said to him, "Fair knight, God bless thee, for much ye done this day for us; wherefore we pray ye come us and receive the honour and the prize, as ye have hipfully deserved it."

My fair lords," said Sir Lancelot, "wit ye well if I deserved thanks, I have sore bought them, for I am never to escape with my life; therefore I pray ye let depart, for I am hurt. I take no thought of honour, had rather rest me than be lord of all the world." therewith he groaned piteously, and rode a great p away from them.

nd Sir Lavaine rode him, sad at heart, for broken spear still stuck in Sir Lancelot's side, the blood streamed y from the wound. n they came near a

wood more than a mile from the lists, where he knew h could be hidden.

Then said he to Sir Lavaine, "O gentle knight, help m to pull out this spear head from my side, for the pai thereof nigh killeth me."

"Dear lord," said he, "I fain would help ye; but I dread to draw it forth, lest ye should die for loss o blood."

"I charge you as you love me," said Sir Lancelot, "draw it out."

So they dismounted, and with a mighty wrench Sir La vaine drew the spear forth from Sir Lancelot's side whereat he gave a marvellous great shriek and ghastly groan, and all his blood leaped forth in a full stream Then he sank swooning to the earth, with a visage pale as death.

"Alas!" cried Sir Lavaine, "what shall I do now?"

And then he turned his master's face towards the wind and sat by him nigh half an hour while he lay quiet as one dead. But at the last he lifted up his eyes, and said, "I pray ye bear me on my horse again, and lead me to a hermit who dwelleth within two miles hence, for he was formerly a knight of Arthur's court, and now hath mighty skill in medicine and herbs."

So with great pain Sir Lavaine got him to his horse, and led him to the hermitage within the wood, beside a stream Then knocked he with his spear upon the door, and prayed to enter. At that a child came out, to whom he said, "Fair child, pray the good man thy master to come hither and let in a knight who is sore wounded."

Anon came out the knight-hermit, whose name was Sir Baldwin, and asked, "Who is this wounded knight?"

"I know not," said Sir Lavaine, "save that he is the no blest knight I ever met with, and hath done this day such

vellous deeds of arms against King Arthur that he hath the prize of the tourney."

hen the hermit gazed long on Sir Lancelot, and hardly him, so pale he was with bleeding, yet said he at the "Who art thou, lord?"

Lancelot answered feebly, "I am a stranger knight nturous, who laboureth through many realms to win hip."

Why hidest thou thy name, dear lord, from me?" cried Baldwin; "for in sooth I know thee now to be the est knight in all the world—my lord Sir Lancelot du , with whom I long had fellowship at the Round e."

ince ye know me, fair sir," said he, "I pray ye, for st's sake, to help me if ye may."

oubt not," replied he, "that ye shall live and fair right

en he staunched his wound, and gave him strong medi- and cordials till he was refreshed from his faintness came to himself again.

w after the jousting was done King Arthur held a and asked to see the knight with the red sleeve that he t take the prize. So they told him how that knight idden from the field wounded nigh to death. "These e worst tidings I have heard for many years," cried ie king; "I would not for my kingdom he were slain."

en all men asked, "Know ye him, lord?"

may not tell ye at this time," said he; "but would to we had good tidings of him."

en Sir Gawain prayed leave to go and seek that t, which the king gladly gave him. So forthwith he ted and rode many leagues round Camelot, but could no tidings.

thin two days thereafter King Arthur and his knights

returned from Camelot, and Sir Gawain chanced to lodg at Astolat, in the house of Sir Bernard. And there came i the fair Elaine to him, and prayed him news of the tour nament, and who won the prize. "A knight with a whit shield," said he, "who bare a red sleeve on his helm, smot down all comers and won the day."

At that the visage of Elaine changed suddenly fron white to red, and heartily she thanked our Lady.

Then said Sir Gawain, "Know ye that knight?" an urged her till she told him that it was her sleeve he wore So Sir Gawain knew it was for love that she had given it and when he heard she kept his proper shield he prayed t see it.

As soon as it was brought he saw Sir Lancelot's arm thereon, and cried, "Alas! now am I heavier of hear than ever yet."

"Wherefore?" said fair Elaine.

"Fair damsel," answered he, "know ye not that the knigh ye love is of all knights the noblest in the world, Sir Lance lot du Lake? With all my heart I pray ye may have jo of each other, but hardly dare I think that ye shall see hin in this world again, for he is so sore wounded he ma scarcely live, and is gone out of sight where none can fin him."

Then was Elaine nigh mad with grief and sorrow, an with piteous words she prayed her father that she might g seek Sir Lancelot and her brother. So in the end her fathe gave her leave, and she departed.

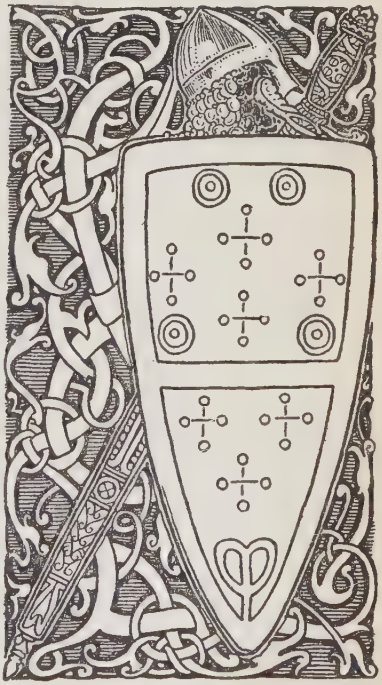
And on the morrow came Sir Gawain to the court, an told how he had found Sir Lancelot's shield in Elaine' keeping, and how it was her sleeve which he had worn whereat all marvelled, for Sir Lancelot had done for he more than he had ever done for any woman.

But when Queen Guinevere heard it she was beside her

vith wrath, and sending privily for Sir Bors, who sor-
d sorely that through him Sir Lancelot had been hurt
Iave ye now heard," said she, "how falsely Sir Lance-
ath betrayed me?"

beseech thee, madam," said he, "speak not so, for else
y not hear thee."

hall I not call him
or," cried she, "who hath
another lady's token at
ousting?"



e sure he did it, madam,
o ill intent," replied Sir
"but that he might be
r hidden, for never did
that wise before."

ow shame on him, and
who wouldst help him,"
the queen.

Iadam, say what ye
' said he; "but I must
to seek him, and God
me soon good tidings of

with that he departed
d Sir Lancelot.

w Elaine had ridden
full haste from Astolat,
ame to Camelot, and there she sought throughout the
ry for any news of Lancelot. And so it chanced that
avaine was riding near the hermitage to exercise his
and when she saw him she ran up and cried aloud,
doth my lord Sir Lancelot fare?"

en said Sir Lavaine, marvelling greatly, "How know
lord's name, fair sister?"

So she told him how Sir Gawain had lodged with Sir Bernard, and knew Sir Lancelot's shield.

Then prayed she to see his lord forthwith, and when she came to the hermitage and found him lying there sore sick and bleeding, she swooned for sorrow. Anon, as she revived, Sir Lancelot kissed her, and said, "Fair maid, I pray ye take comfort, for, by God's grace, I shall be shortly whole of this wound, and if ye be come to tend me, I am heartily bounden to your great kindness." Yet was he sore vexed to hear Sir Gawain had discovered him, for he knew Queen Guinevere would be full wroth because of the red sleeve.

So Elaine rested in the hermitage, and ever night and day she watched and waited on Sir Lancelot, and would let none other tend him. And as she saw him more, the more she set her love upon him, and could by no means withdraw it. Then said Sir Lancelot to Sir Lavaine, "I pray thee set some to watch for the good knight Sir Bors, for as he hurt me, so will he surely seek for me."

Now Sir Bors by this time had come to Camelot, and was seeking for Sir Lancelot everywhere, so Sir Lavaine soon found him, and brought him to the hermitage.

And when he saw Sir Lancelot pale and feeble, he wept for pity and sorrow that he had given him that grievous wound. "God send thee a right speedy cure, dear lord," said he; "for I am of all men most unhappy to have wounded thee, who art our leader, and the noblest knight in all the world."

"Fair cousin," said Sir Lancelot, "be comforted, for I have but gained what I sought, and it was through pride that I was hurt, for had I warned ye of my coming it had not been; wherefore let us speak of other things."

So they talked long together, and Sir Bors told him of the queen's anger. Then he asked Sir Lancelot, "Was it

this maid who tendeth you so lovingly ye had the
?"
ea," said Sir Lancelot; "and would I could persuade
o withdraw her love from me."
Vhy should ye do so?" said Sir Bors; "for she is pass-
air and loving. I would to heaven ye could love her."
hat may not be," replied he; "but it repenteth me in
to grieve her."
en they talked of other matters, and of the great joust-
t Allhallowtide next coming, between King Arthur
he King of North Wales.
bide with me till then," said Sir Lancelot, "for by that
I trust to be all whole again, and we will go together."
Elaine daily and nightly tending him, within a month
lt so strong he deemed himself full cured. Then on
when Sir Bors and Sir Lavaine were from the her-
;e, and the knight-hermit also was gone forth, Sir
elot prayed Elaine to bring him some herbs from the
.
ıen she was gone he rose and made haste to arm him-
nd try if he were whole enough to joust, and mounted
s horse, which was fresh with lack of labour for so long
e. But when he set his spear in the rest and tried
rmour, the horse bounded and leapt beneath him, so
Sir Lancelot strained to keep him back. And there-
his wound, which was not wholly healed, burst forth
, and with a mighty groan he sank down swooning on
round.
that came fair Elaine and wept and piteously moaned
him lying so. And when Sir Bors and Sir Lavaine
back, she called them traitors to let him rise, or to
any rumour of the tournament. Anon the hermit re-
l and was wroth to see Sir Lancelot risen, but within
le he recovered him from his swoon and staunched

the wound. Then Sir Lancelot told him how he had risen of his own will to assay his strength for the tournament. But the hermit bade him rest and let Sir Bors go alone, for else would he sorely peril his life. And Elaine, with tears, prayed him in the same wise, so that Sir Lancelot in the end consented.

So Sir Bors departed to the tournament, and there he did such feats of arms that the prize was given between him and Sir Gawain, who did like valiantly.

And when all was over he came back and told Sir Lancelot, and found him so nigh well that he could rise and walk. And within a while thereafter he departed from the hermitage and went with Sir Bors, Sir Lavaine, and fair Elaine to Astolat, where Sir Bernard joyfully received them.

But after they had lodged there a few days Sir Lancelot and Sir Bors must needs depart and return to King Arthur's court.

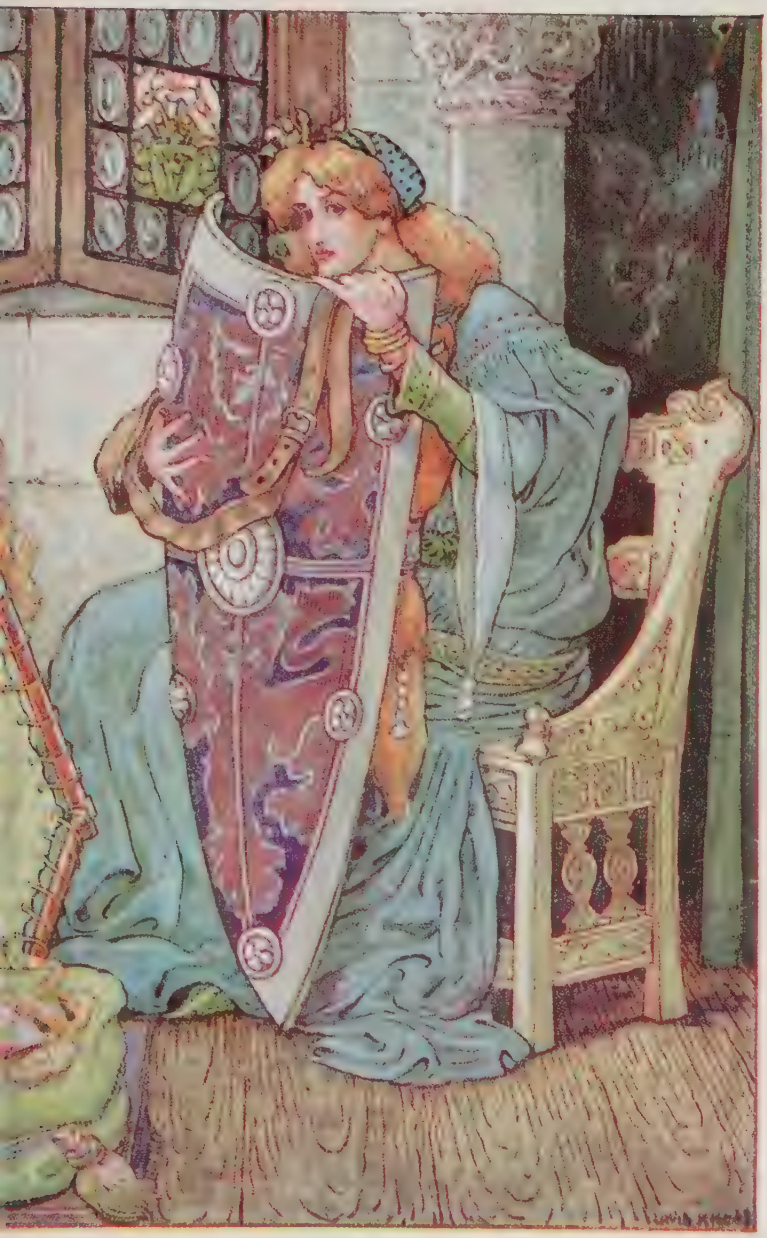
So when Elaine knew Sir Lancelot must go, she came to him and said, "Have mercy on me, fair knight, and let me not die for your love."

Then said Sir Lancelot, very sad at heart, "Fair maid, what would ye that I should do for you?"

"If I may not be your wife, dear lord," she answered, "I must die."

"Alas!" said he, "I pray Heaven that may not be; for in sooth I may not be your husband. But fain would I show ye what thankfulness I can for all your love and kindness to me. And ever will I be your knight, fair maiden; and if it chance that ye shall ever wed some noble knight, right heartily will I give ye such a dower as half my lands will bring."

"Alas! what shall that aid me?" answered she; "for I must die," and therewith she fell to the earth in a deep swoon.



ELAINE GUARDING LANCELOT'S SHIELD

en was Sir Lancelot passing heavy of heart, and said to
Bernard and Sir Lavaine, "What shall I do for her?"
las!" said Sir Bernard, "I know well that she will
or your sake."
d Sir Lavaine said, "I marvel not that she so sorely
neth your departure, for truly I do as she doth, and
I once have seen you, lord, I cannot leave you."
anon, with a full sorrowful heart, Sir Lancelot took
ave, and Sir Lavaine rode with him to the court. And
Arthur and the knights of the Round Table joyed
ly to see him whole of his wound, but Queen Guinevere
orely wroth, and neither spake with him nor greeted

w when Sir Lancelot had departed, the Maid of Asto-
uld neither eat, nor drink, nor sleep for sorrow; and
g thus endured ten days, she felt within herself that
ust die.
en sent she for a holy man, and was shriven and re-
d the sacrament. But when he told her she must leave
arthly thoughts, she answered, "Am I not an earthly
an? What sin is it to love the noblest knight of all
orld? And, by my truth, I am not able to withstand
ove whereof I die; wherefore, I pray the High Fa-
of Heaven, to have mercy on my soul."
en she besought Sir Bernard to indite a letter as she
d devise, and said, "When I am dead put this within
and, and dress me in my fairest clothes, and lay me
arge, all covered with black samite, and steer it down
iver till it reach the court. Thus, father, I beseech
et it be."
en, full of grief, he promised her it should be so. And
she died, and all the household made a bitter lamenta-
ver her.
en did they as she had desired, and laid her body,

richly dressed, upon a bed within the barge, and a true servant steered it down the river towards the court.

Now King Arthur and Queen Guinevere sat at a window of the palace, and saw the barge come floating with the tide, and marvelled what was laid therein, and sent a messenger to see, who, soon returning, prayed them to come forth.

When they came to the shore they marvelled greatly, and the king asked of the serving-man who steered the barge what this might mean. But he made signs that he was dumb, and pointed to the letter in the damsel's hands. So King Arthur took the letter from the hand of the corpse and found thereon written, "To the noble knight, Sir Lancelot du Lake."

Then was Sir Lancelot sent for, and the letter read aloud by a clerk, and thus it was written:

"Most noble knight, my lord Sir Lancelot, now hath death forever parted us. I, whom men call the Maid of Astolat, set my love upon you, and have died for your sake. This is my last request, that ye pray for my soul and give me burial. Grant me this, Sir Lancelot, as thou art a peerless knight."

At these words the queen and all the knights wept sore for pity.

Then said Sir Lancelot, "My lord, I am right heavy for the death of this fair damsel; and God knoweth that right unwillingly I caused it, for she was good as she was fair, and much was I beholden to her; but she loved me beyond measure, and asked me that I could not give her."

"Ye might have shown her gentleness enough to save her life," answered the queen.

"Madam," said he, "she would but be repaid by my taking her to wife, and that I could not grant her, for love cometh of the heart and not by constraint."

HOW THE LIFELESS ELAINE FLOATED DOWN TO CAMELOT

That is true," said the king; "for love is free."
pray you," said Sir Lancelot, "let me now grant her asking, to be buried by me."
on the morrow, he caused her body to be buried richly solemnly, and ordained masses for her soul, and made t sorrow over her.
hen the queen sent for Sir Lancelot, and prayed his ion for her wrath against him without cause. "This ot the first time it hath been so," answered he; "yet I ever bear with ye, and so do I now forgive you."
Queen Guinevere and Sir Lancelot were made friends n; but anon such favour did she show him as in the end ght many evils on them both and all the realm.

CHAPTER XIV

THE WAR BETWEEN KING ARTHUR AND SIR LANCELOT AND THE DEATH OF KING ARTHUR

WITHIN a while thereafter was a jousting at the court, wherein Sir Lancelot won the prize. And two of those he smote down were Sir Agravaine, the brother of Sir Gawain, and Sir Modred, his false brother—King Arthur's son by Belisent. And because of his victory they hated Sir Lancelot, and sought how they might injure him.

So on a night when King Arthur was hunting in the forest, and the queen sent for Sir Lancelot to her chamber, they two espied him; and thinking now to make a scandal and a quarrel between Lancelot and the king, they found twelve others, and said Sir Lancelot was even now in the queen's chamber and King Arthur was dishonoured.

Then, all armed, they came suddenly round the queen's door, and cried, "Traitor! now art thou taken."

"Madam, we be betrayed," said Sir Lancelot; "yet shall my life cost these men dear."

Then did the queen weep sore, and dismally she cried, "Alas! there is no armour here whereby ye might withstand so many; wherefore ye will be slain, and I be burnt for the dread crime they will charge on me."

ut while she spake the shouting of the knights was heard hout, "Traitor, come forth, for now thou art snared!" Better were twenty deaths at once than this vile out- " said Sir Lancelot.

hen he kissed her and said, "Most noble lady, I be- th ye, as I have ever been your own true knight, take rage; pray for my soul if I be now slain, and trust my hful friends, Sir Bors and Sir Lavaine, to save you from fire."

ut ever bitterly she wept and moaned, and cried, "Would I that they would take and slay me, and that thou couldst pe."

That shall never be," said he. And wrapping his mantle nd his arm he unbarred the door a little space, so that one could enter.

hen first rushed in Sir Chalaunce, a full strong knight, lifted up his sword to smite Sir Lancelot; but lightly avoided him, and struck Sir Chalaunce, with his hand a sore buffet on the head as felled him dead upon the r.

hen Sir Lancelot pulled in his body and barred the r again, and dressed himself in his armour, and took his vn sword in his hand.

ut still the knights cried mightily without the door, aitor, come forth!"

Be silent and depart," replied Sir Lancelot; "for be ye ye will not take me, and to-morrow will I meet ye face ace before the king."

Ye shall have no such grace," they cried; "but we will thee, or take thee as we list."

Then save yourselves who may," he thundered, and ewith suddenly unbarred the door and rushed forth at n. And at the first blow he slew Sir Agravaine, and him twelve other knights, with twelve more mighty

buffets. And none of all escaped him save Sir Modred, who, sorely wounded, fled away for life.

Then returned he to the queen, and said, "Now, madam, will I depart, and if ye be in any danger I pray ye come to me."

"Surely will I stay here, for I am queen," she answered; "yet if to-morrow any harm come to me I trust to thee for rescue."

"Have ye no doubt of me," said he, "forever while I live am I your own true knight."

Therewith he took his leave, and went and told Sir Bors and all his kindred of this adventure. "We will be with thee in this quarrel," said they all; "and if the queen be sentenced to the fire, we certainly will save her."

Meanwhile Sir Modred, in great fear and pain, fled from the court, and rode until he found King Arthur, and told him all that had befallen. But the king would scarce believe him till he came and saw the bodies of Sir Agravaine and all the other knights.

Then felt he in himself that all was true, and with his passing grief his heart nigh broke. "Alas!" cried he, "now is the fellowship of the Round Table forever broken: yea, woe is me! I may not with my honour spare my queen."

Anon it was ordained that Queen Guinevere should be burnt to death because she had dishonoured King Arthur.

But when Sir Gawain heard thereof, he came before the king, and said, "My lord, I counsel thee be not too hasty in this matter, but stay the judgment of the queen a season, for it may well be that Sir Lancelot was in her chamber for no evil, seeing she is greatly beholden to him for so many deeds done for her sake, and peradventure she had sent to him to thank him, and did it secretly that she might avoid slander."

IR MODRED IN GREAT FEAR AND PAIN
FLED FROM THE COURT

ıt King Arthur answered, full of grief, "Alas! I may ıelp her; she is judged as any other woman."

ıen he required Sir Gawain and his brethren, Sir Ga- and Sir Gareth, to be ready to bear the queen to-mor- to the place of execution.

ſay, noble lord," replied Sir Gawain, "that can I never or neither will my heart suffer me to see the queen die, shall men ever say I was of your counsel in this er."

ıen said his brothers, "Ye may command us to be there, ince it is against our will, we will be without arms, we may do no battle against her."

on the morrow was Queen Guinevere led forth to die e, and a mighty crowd was there, of knights and nobles, d and unarmed. And all the lords and ladies wept t that piteous sight. Then was she shriven by a priest, he men came nigh to bind her to the stake and light re.

that Sir Lancelot's spies rode hastily and told him and ndred, who lay hidden in a wood hard by; and sud- , with twenty knights, he rushed into the midst of all ırong to rescue her.

t certain of King Arthur's knights rose up and fought them, and there was a full great battle and confusion. Sir Lancelot drave fiercely here and there among the and smote on every side, and at every blow struck a knight, so that many were slain by him and his vs.

en was the queen set free, and caught up on Sir ılot's saddle and fled away with him and all his com- to the Castle of La Joyous Garde.

w so it chanced that, in the turmoil of the fighting, ancelot had unawares struck down and slain the two knights Sir Gareth and Sir Gaheris, knowing it not,

for he fought wildly, and saw not that they were unarmed

When King Arthur heard thereof, and of all that battle and the rescue of the queen, he sorrowed heavily for those good knights, and was passing wroth with Lancelot and the queen.

But when Sir Gawain heard of his brethren's death he swooned for sorrow and wrath, for he wist that Sir Lancelot had killed them in malice. And as soon as he recovered he ran in to the king, and said, "Lord, king and uncle, hear this oath which now I swear, that from this day I will not fail Sir Lancelot till one of us hath slain the other. And now, unless ye haste to war with him that we may be avenged, will I myself alone go after him."

Then the king, full of wrath and grief, agreed thereto and sent letters throughout the realm to summon all his knights, and went with a vast army to besiege the Castle of La Joyous Garde. And Sir Lancelot, with his knights mightily defended it; but never would he suffer any to go forth and attack one of the king's army, for he was right loth to fight against him.

So when fifteen weeks were passed, and King Arthur's army wasted itself in vain against the castle, for it was passing strong, it chanced upon a day Sir Lancelot was looking from the walls and espied King Arthur and Sir Gawain close beside.

"Come forth, Sir Lancelot," said King Arthur right fiercely, "and let us two meet in the midst of the field."

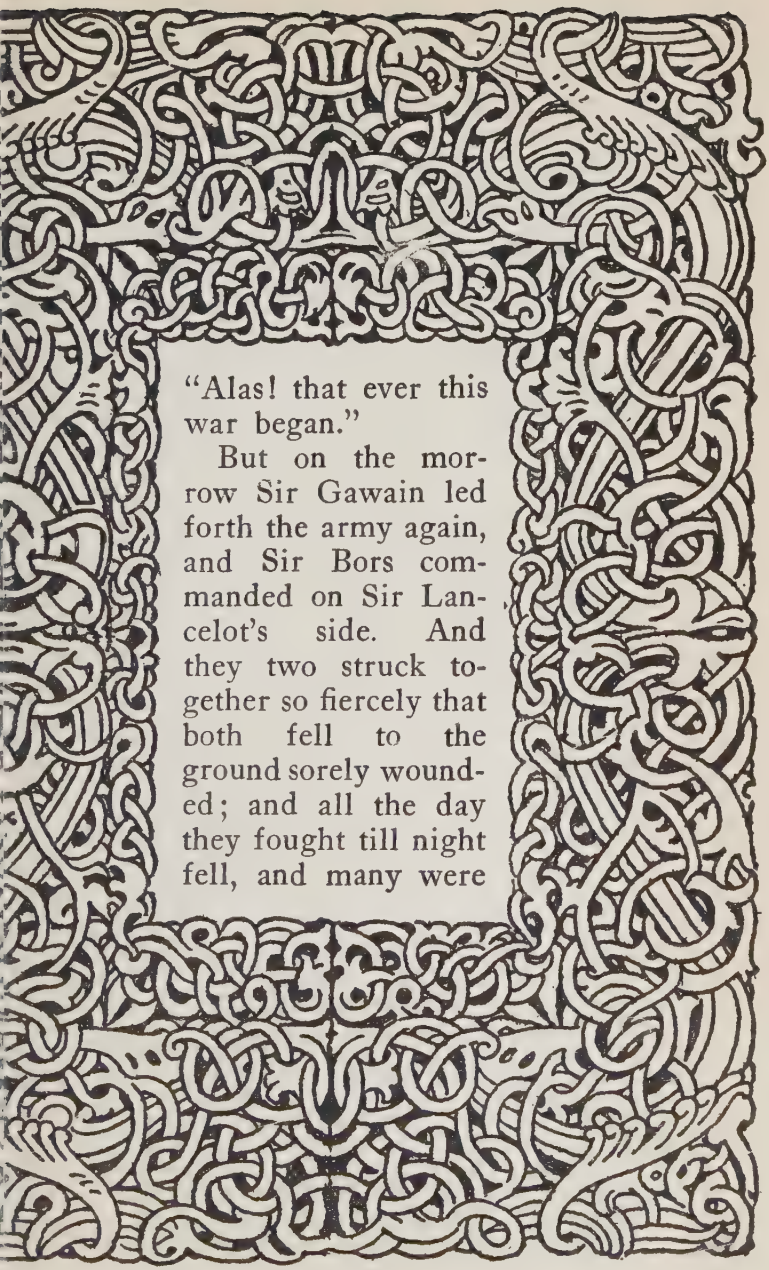
"God forbid that I should encounter with thee, lord, for thou didst make me a knight," replied Sir Lancelot.

Then cried Sir Gawain, "Shame on thee, traitor and false knight, yet be ye well assured we will regain the queen and slay thee and thy company; yea, double shame on ye to slay my brother Gaheris unarmed, Sir Gareth also, who

l ye so well. For that treachery, be sure I am thine
y till death."
las!" cried Sir Lancelot, "that I hear such tidings,
knew not I had slain those noble knights, and right
y now do I repent it with a heavy heart. Yet abate
vrath, Sir Gawain, for ye know full well I did it by
nance, for I loved them ever as my own brothers."
hou liest, false recreant," cried Sir Gawain fiercely.
that Sir Lancelot was wroth, and said, "I well see thou
ow mine enemy, and that there can be no more peace
thee, or with my lord the king, else would I gladly
back the queen."
en the king would fain have listened to Sir Lancelot,
nore than all his own wrong did he grieve at the sore
and damage of the realm, but Sir Gawain persuaded
against it, and ever cried out foully on Sir Lancelot.
nen Sir Bors and the other knights of Lancelot's party
l the fierce words of Sir Gawain, they were passing
n, and prayed to ride forth and be avenged on him,
ney were weary of so long waiting to no good. And
end Sir Lancelot, with a heavy heart, consented.
on the morrow the hosts on either side met in the field,
here was a great battle. And Sir Gawain prayed his
ts chiefly to set upon Sir Lancelot; but Sir Lancelot
nanded his company to forbear King Arthur and Sir
ain.
the two armies jousted together right fiercely, and Sir
ain proffered to encounter with Sir Lionel, and over-
him. But Sir Bors, and Sir Blamor, and Sir Palo-
s, who were on Sir Lancelot's side, did great feats of
and overthrew many of King Arthur's knights.
en the king came forth against Sir Lancelot, but Sir
elot forbore him and would not strike again.
that Sir Bors rode up against the king and smote him

down. But Sir Lancelot cried, "Touch him not on pain of thy head," and going to King Arthur he alighted and gave him his own horse, saying, "My lord, I pray thee forbear this strife, for it can bring to neither of us any honour."

And when King Arthur looked on him the tears came to his eyes as he thought of his noble courtesy, and he said within himself,



"Alas! that ever this war began."

But on the morrow Sir Gawain led forth the army again, and Sir Bors commanded on Sir Lancelot's side. And they two struck together so fiercely that both fell to the ground sorely wounded; and all the day they fought till night fell, and many were

slain on both sides, yet in the end neither gained the victor

But by now the fame of this fierce war spread throug all Christendom, and when the Pope heard thereof he se a Bull, and charged King Arthur to make peace with Lanc lot, and receive back Queen Guinevere; and for the o fence imputed to her, absolution should be given by t Pope.

Thereto would King Arthur straightway have obeye but Sir Gawain ever urged him to refuse.

When Sir Lancelot heard thereof, he wrote thus to t king: "It was never in my thought, lord, to withhold t queen from thee; but since she was condemned for m sake to death, I deemed it but a just and knightly part t rescue her therefrom; wherefore I recommend me to yo grace, and within eight days will I come to thee and brin the queen in safety."

Then, within eight days, as he had said, Sir Lancelot rod from out the castle with Queen Guinevere, and a hundre knights for company, each carrying an olive branch, in sig of peace. And so they came to the court, and found Kin Arthur sitting on his throne, with Sir Gawain and man other knights around him. And when Sir Lancelot entere with the queen, they both kneeled down before t king.

Anon Sir Lancelot rose and said, "My lord, I hav brought hither my lady the queen again, as right requiret and by commandment of the Pope and you. I pray ye tak her to your heart again and forget the past. For mysel I may ask nothing, and for my sin I shall have sorrow an sore punishment; yet I would to Heaven I might have yo grace."

But ere the king could answer, for he was moved wit pity at his words, Sir Gawain cried aloud, "Let the king d as he will, but be sure, Sir Lancelot, thou and I shall neve

ccorded while we live, for thou hast slain my brethren
orously and unarmed."
As Heaven is my help," replied Sir Lancelot, "I did it
rantly, for I loved them well, and while I live I shall
ail their death; but to make war with me were no avail,
I must needs fight with thee if thou assailest, and per-
nture I might kill thee also, which I were right loth
."
will forgive thee never," cried Sir Gawain, "and if
ing accordeth with thee he shall lose my service."
ien the knights who stood near tried to reconcile Sir
ain to Sir Lancelot, but he would not hear them. So,
e last, Sir Lancelot said, "Since peace is vain, I will de-
lest I bring more evil on my fellowship."
d as he turned to go, the tears fell from him, and he
"Alas, most noble Christian realm, which I have
l above all others, now shall I see thee never more!"
said he to the queen, "Madam, now must I leave ye
this noble fellowship forever. And, I beseech ye,
for me, and if ye ever be defamed of any, let me hear
of, and as I have been ever thy true knight in right
wrong, so will I be again."
ith that he kneeled and kissed King Arthur's hands,
departed on his way. And there was none in all that
, save Sir Gawain, alone, but wept to see him go.
he returned with all his knights to the Castle of La
us Garde, and, for his sorrow's sake, he named it
rous Garde thenceforth.
on he left the realm, and went with many of his fel-
ip beyond the sea to France, and there divided
is lands among them equally, he sharing but as the

d from that time forward peace had been between
and King Arthur, but for Sir Gawain, who left the

king no rest, but constantly persuaded him that Lancelo was raising mighty hosts against him.

So in the end his malice overcame the king, who left th government in charge of Modred, and made him guardia of the queen, and went with a great army to invade Si Lancelot's lands.

Yet Sir Lancelot would make no war upon the king, an sent a message to gain peace on any terms King Arthu chose. But Sir Gawain met the herald ere he reached th king, and sent him back with taunting and bitter words Whereat Sir Lancelot sorrowfully called his knights to gether and fortified the Castle of Benwicke, and there wa shortly besieged by the army of King Arthur.

Yet every day Sir Gawain rode up to the walls, and cried out foully on Sir Lancelot, till, upon a time, Sir Lancelo answered him that he would meet him in the field and pu his boasting to the proof. So it was agreed on both side that there should none come nigh them or separate them til one had fallen or yielded; and they two rode forth.

Then did they wheel their horses apart, and turning came together as it had been thunder, so that both horse fell, and both their lances broke. At that they drew thei swords and set upon each other fiercely, with passing griev ous strokes.

Now Sir Gawain had through magic a marvellous grea gift. For every day, from morning till noon, his strengt waxed to the might of seven men, but after that waned to hi natural force. Therefore till noon he gave Sir Lancelo many mighty buffets, which scarcely he endured. Yet greatl he forbore Sir Gawain, for he was aware of his enchant ment, and smote him slightly till his own knights marvelled But after noon Sir Gawain's strength sank fast, and then with one full blow, Sir Lancelot laid him on the earth Then Sir Gawain cried out, "Turn not away, thou traito

BUT THE KING'S SIDE HAD THE VICTORY, FOR HE WAS BEYOND HIMSELF WITH MIGHT AND PASSION

ght, but slay me if thou wilt, or else I will arise and
t with thee again some other time."
'Sir Knight," replied Sir Lancelot, "I never yet smote a
en man."
At that they bore Sir Gawain sorely wounded to his tent,
King Arthur withdrew his men, for he was loth to shed
blood of so many knights of his own fellowship.
But now came tidings to King Arthur from across the
which caused him to return in haste. For thus the
vs ran, that no sooner was Sir Modred set up in his re-
cy, than he had forged false tidings from abroad that
king had fallen in a battle with Sir Lancelot. Whereat
had proclaimed himself the king, and had been crowned
Canterbury, where he had held a coronation feast for
een days. Then he had gone to Winchester, where
een Guinevere abode, and had commanded her to be his
e; whereto, for fear and sore perplexity, she had feigned
sent, but under pretext of preparing for the marriage,
fled in haste to London and taken shelter in the Tower,
ifying it and providing it with all manner of victuals,
defending it against Sir Modred, and answering to all
threats that she would rather slay herself than be his
en.

Thus was it written to King
hur. Then, in passing great
th and haste, he came with all
army swiftly back from
nce and sailed to England.
when Sir Modred heard
eof, he left the Tower and
ched with all his host to meet
king at Dover.

hen fled Queen Guinevere to
esbury to a nunnery, and there

she clothed herself in sackcloth, and spent her time in praying for the king and in good deeds and fasting. And in that nunnery evermore she lived, sorely repenting and mourning for her sin, and for the ruin she had brought on all the realm. And there anon she died.

And when Sir Lancelot heard thereof, he put his knightly armour off, and bade farewell to all his kin, and went a mighty pilgrimage for many years, and after lived a hermit till his death.

When Sir Modred came to Dover, he found King Arthur and his army but just landed; and there they fought a fierce and bloody battle, and many great and noble knights fell on both sides.

But the king's side had the victory, for he was beyond himself with might and passion, and all his knights so fiercely followed him, that, in spite of all their multitude, they drove Sir Modred's army back with fearful wounds and slaughter, and slept that night upon the battle-field.

But Sir Gawain was smitten by an arrow in the wound Sir Lancelot gave him, and wounded to the death. Then was he borne to the king's tent, and King Arthur sorrowed over him as it had been his own son. "Alas!" said he; "in Sir Lancelot and in you I had my greatest earthly joy, and now is all gone from me."

And Sir Gawain answered, with a feeble voice, "My lord and king, I know well my death is come, and through my own wilfulness, for I am smitten in the wound Sir Lancelot gave me. Alas! that I have been the cause of all this war, for but for me thou hadst been now at peace with Lancelot, and then had Modred never done this treason. I pray ye, therefore, my dear lord, be now agreed with Lancelot, and tell him, that although he gave me my death-

und, it was through my own seeking; wherefore I be-
ch him to come back to England, and here to visit my
ıb, and pray for my soul."
When he had thus spoken, Sir Gawain gave up his ghost,
l the king grievously mourned for him.
Then they told him that the enemy had camped on Bar-
n Downs, whereat, with all his hosts, he straightway
rched there, and fought again a bloody battle, and over-
ew Sir Modred utterly. Howbeit, he raised yet another
ny, and retreating ever from before the king, increased
numbers as he went, till at the farthest west in Lyonesse,
once more made a stand.
Now, on the night of Trinity Sunday, being the eve of
battle, King Arthur had a vision, and saw Sir Gawain
a dream, who warned him not to fight with Modred on
morrow, else he would be surely slain; and prayed him
delay till Lancelot and his knights should come to aid
n.
So when King Arthur woke he told his lords and knights
: vision, and all agreed to wait the coming of Sir Lance-
Then a herald was sent with a message of truce to Sir
dred, and a treaty was made that neither army should
il the other.
But when the treaty was agreed upon, and the heralds re-
ıed, King Arthur said to his knights, "Beware, lest Sir
dred deceive us, for I in no wise trust him, and if swords
drawn be ready to encounter!" And Sir Modred like-
e gave an order, that if any man of the king's army drew
sword, they should begin to fight.
And as it chanced, a knight of the king's side was bitten
ın adder in the foot, and hastily drew forth his sword to
it. That saw Sir Modred, and forthwith commanded
his army to assail the king's.

So both sides rushed to battle, and fought passing fiercely. And when the king saw there was no hope to stay them, he did right mightily and nobly as a king should do, and ever, like a lion, raged in the thickest of the press, and slew on the right hand and on the left, till his horse went fetlock deep in blood. So all day long they fought, and stinted not till many a noble knight was slain.

But the king was passing sorrowful to see his trusty knights lie dead on every side. And at the last but two remained beside him, Sir Lucan and his brother, Sir Bedivere, and both were sorely wounded.

"Now am I come to mine end," said King Arthur; "but, lo! that traitor Modred liveth yet, and I may not die till I have slain him. Now, give me my spear, Sir Lucan."

"Lord, let him be," replied Sir Lucan; "for if ye pass through this unhappy day, ye shall be right well revenged upon him. My good lord, remember well your dream, and what the spirit of Sir Gawain did forewarn ye."

"Betide me life, betide me death," said the king; "now I see him yonder alone, he shall never escape my hands, for at a better revenge shall I never have him."

"God speed you well," said Sir Bedivere.

Then King Arthur got his spear in both his hands, and ran towards Sir Modred, crying, "Traitor, now is thy death-day come!" And when Sir Modred heard his words, and saw him come, he drew his sword and stood to meet him. Then King Arthur smote Sir Modred through the body more than a fathom. And when Sir Modred felt he had his death-wound, he thrust himself with all his might up to the end of King Arthur's spear, and smote his father, Arthur, with his sword upon the head, so that it pierced both helm and brain-pan.

And therewith Sir Modred fell down stark dead to the

"BETIDE ME LIFE, BETIDE ME DEATH,
NOW I SEE HIM YONDER ALONE"

th, and King Arthur fell down also in a swoon, and oned many times.

Then Sir Lucan and Sir Bedivere came and bare him ay to a little chapel by the sea-shore. And there Sir can sank down with the bleeding of his own wounds, l fell dead.

And King Arthur lay long in a swoon, and when came to himself, he found Sir Lucan lying dead beside n, and Sir Bedivere weeping over the body of his ther.

Then said the king to Sir Bedivere, "Weeping will avail longer, else would I grieve for evermore. Alas! now he fellowship of the Round Table dissolved forever, l all my realm I have so loved is wasted with war. But time hieth fast, wherefore take thou Excalibur, my good rd, and go therewith to yonder water-side and throw it and bring me word what thing thou seest."

So Sir Bedivere departed; but as he went he looked upon sword, the hilt whereof was all inlaid with precious es exceeding rich. And presently he said within him-, "If I now throw this sword into the water, what good uld come of it?" So he hid the sword among the reeds, l came again to the king.

What sawest thou?" said he to Sir Bedivere.

Lord," said he, "I saw nothing else but wind and ves."

Thou hast untruly spoken," said the king; "wherefore lightly back and throw it in, and spare not."

Then Sir Bedivere returned again, and took the sword up his hand; but when he looked on it, he thought it sin and me to throw away a thing so noble. Wherefore he hid et again, and went back to the king.

What saw ye?" said King Arthur.

"Lord," answered he, "I saw nothing but the water ebbing and flowing."

"Oh, traitor and untrue!" cried out the king; "twice hast thou now betrayed me. Art thou called of men a noble knight, and wouldst betray me for a jewelled sword? Now, therefore, go again for the last time, for thy tarrying hath put me in sore peril of my life, and I fear my wound hath taken cold; and if thou do it not this time, by my faith I will arise and slay thee with my hands."

Then Sir Bedivere ran quickly and took up the sword, and went down to the water's edge, and bound the girdle round the hilt and threw it far into the water. And lo! an arm and hand came forth above the water, and caught the sword, and brandished it three times, and vanished.

So Sir Bedivere came again to the king and told him what he had seen.

"Help me from hence," said King Arthur; "for I dread me I have tarried over long."

Then Sir Bedivere took the king up in his arms, and bore him to the water's edge. And by the shore they saw a barge with three fair queens therein, all dressed in black, and when they saw King Arthur they wept and wailed.

"Now put me in the barge," said he to Sir Bedivere, and tenderly he did so.

Then the three queens received him, and he laid his head upon the lap of one of them, who cried, "Alas! dear brother, why have ye tarried so long, for your wound hath taken cold?"

With that the barge put from the land, and when Sir Bedivere saw it departing, he cried with a bitter cry, "Alas! my lord King Arthur, what shall become of me now ye have gone from me?"

"Comfort ye," said King Arthur, "and be strong, for I may no more help ye. I go to the Vale of Avilion to heal

f my grievous wound, and if ye see me no more, pray
ny soul."
ien the three queens kneeled down around the king and
y wept and wailed, and the barge went forth to sea,
departed slowly out of Sir Bedivere's sight.

THE END